

AN
EXPLANATION
OF THE
REVELATION
OF
ST JOHN THE DIVINE.

WITH SOME
OBSERVATIONS ON THE PROPHECIES AND VISIONS, &c.

TENDING TO SHEW

What of them are already fulfilled—what of them are now fulfilling, and what of them will be accomplished in the latter days glory of the Church of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

BY DAVID DICK,

STOCKING-MAKER IN HAWICK.

And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High; whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.

Dan. vii. 27.

Then answered Amos, and said unto Amaziah, I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son; but I was an herdsman, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit.

Amos vii. 14.

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1799.

23

EXPLANATION
OF THE
REVELATION



ENTERED IN STATIONER'S HALL.

BY DAVID BAKER

EDINBURGH:

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1793

P R E F A C E.

SINCERE READER,

ALL health, grace, mercy, and peace be unto thee from God our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, who loved us and gave himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice unto God for a sweet smelling favour.

You need not expect any critical dissertations and high-flown expressions in this treatise on this book; neither need you expect new translations of the ancient languages, for I am not acquainted with them, having never been taught them; so you must be content to take it in thy own mother-tongue, that is, in plain English. No doubt but many will be surpris'd to hear that such a plain man as I am durst take in hand to treat on such a subject, when so many great and illustrious scholars has wrote on this dark portion of Scripture in former ages, and whether they have attained to the truth or not, time must declare.

When I began (in the year of our Lord 1794) to read and consider these visions that were revealed to St John, in the isle called Patmos, and other portions of Scripture which

seemed unto me to agree with and correspond to these visions, I thought it good to set pen to paper, and commit my thoughts to writing, merely for my own private use and benefit; having no thought that ever it should come abroad to the public. But, being importuned and solicited by some of my neighbours, which had the opportunity of seeing it, to let it be printed; so that, after long consideration, I have at last consented that it should be published. Now if any find fault with me for publishing it, and with the work itself, let them remember the advice of truth itself—first to pull the beam out of their own eye, and then they will see clearly to pull the mote out of mine.

But, on the other hand, if these Explanations throws any light upon the text, unto the plain and serious reader, my object is so far gained; and I pray that the blessing of God may attend it for that purpose.

Reader,

I remain your most affectionate, &c.

D. D.

AN
EXPLANATION
OF THE
REVELATION
OF

ST JOHN THE DIVINE.

CHAP. I.

THE Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John :
2 Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw. 3 Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.

These three verses are a preface to this whole prophecy, and gives us an account from whom John received his commission to write these prophecies and visions; and that they were shortly to come to pass. And he bare record of the word of God, and the testimony of Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness. Blessed is

he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy. Here is a blessing promised to him that readeth. I here understand him that readeth, to mean the ministers of the gospel, who read and explain the prophecy of this book unto their several flocks; and those of them that do so in the spirit of the gospel, and in the faith of Jesus, may assure themselves of that blessing which was given unto Abraham and his spiritual seed. But it appears there are but few of our modern clergy very solicitous about this promised blessing; for there are few, if any, that have taken in hand to explain and open up these prophecies, that are contained in this book, unto their audience, or at least they have not sent them abroad into the world, that all might hear and learn. And I have no doubt but those that hear and understand, and keep these things that are written therein, will have a portion of this promised blessing. And I think it is every one's duty, to dwell much in the study of these prophecies, as the time is at hand. As the time of the beginning of these visions was then at hand when John was in the Isle called Patmos, so a great part of them must now be fulfilled, and are fulfilling; so they are close at hand, even at our very door.

4 *John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him*

which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne; 5 And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, 6 And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

Here John begins with a salutation and benediction: Grace and peace from all the three persons of the glorious Trinity, distinctly pointed out, and as distinctly named; and then he comments on the great benefits we have by Jesus Christ, and sets out the greatness of his love—that he so loved us, that he shed his own precious blood, to satisfy the justice of Almighty God for our sins and offences, which is here called *washing us from our sins in his own blood*; and so it is a washing of us clean, when all our sins are pardoned for his sake, and we justified and made God's adopted children, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ.

7 ¶ *Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.*

Here in this verse he informeth the inhabitants of the earth, that the day of judgment

is hasting on a pace, and that he cometh surrounded with clouds of wrath and angry indignation, against them that pierced him, and all kindreds of the earth. We are not to restrict this text to the Roman soldier that pierced our Lord's side with the spear; but we are to understand it of all unto whom the call of the gospel hath come, and hath not been received with faith in them that heard it, but turned a deaf ear unto the sweet calls of Jesus Christ in his gospel, and would have none of him, even when he brought the greatest, best, and most gracious good news from heaven, to the sons of men on this earth; (if any want to know what these good news were, I shall refer them to St Luke ii. 8.—15.) and yet they would not receive him, but spit in his face, and murdered and crucified the Lord of glory! Neither are we to restrict it to the Jewish nation alone, but likewise to the nations of the Gentiles; for hath not Christ been crucified in Rome, and among all his ten horns or kingdoms, that gave their power to the beast, ever since he arose? And not to them only, but to all they amongst the professors of Protestantism, who profess his name, but in works deny him. What I mean by denying him in works is, all those that profess him to be a complete Saviour, and yet will be still adding their own im-

perfect works unto his most pure, perfect, unspotted, and finished work of righteousness, which he wrought out in his own divine and blessed person, and gave to all them that receiveth him, just as he gave himself out to be, and that is, the eternal Son of God, equal with the Father and the Holy Spirit, and one with them.

We must understand by this clause, *All kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him*, all they that depart this life in a final state of unbelief—Jew, Greek, Barbarian, bond or free; all these are termed the kindreds of the earth; for we must note all through this prophecy, the church is always meant by heaven, and the children of the wicked one are meant by earth. *Even so, Amen.* This signifieth, that the things are sure and stedfast to be done.

8 *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.*

Here the Lord Jesus Christ taketh the same titles and attributes unto himself which is due unto God alone. And how will these men stand before him, who dispute, and rob him of his divinity, in denying him his Divine nature? They take away from him all that constitutes him to be a Saviour; for no created being can redeem himself, far less another; for "the ransom of the soul is precious, and

ceaseth for ever." And if the Lord Jesus be not God, all the sons of Adam are lost eternally. And they are little better that deny him his human nature; for if he had not had two natures in his one person, he could not have laid his hand on both parties, and reconciled both in himself, of twain making one new man.

9 I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

It appears that John was banished by some of the Roman Emperors into this island for preaching the word of God. Some say it was by Domitian; but it is of little consequence unto us which of them it was; but we are sure he was there under persecution.

10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a great voice as of a trumpet.

What is meant by being in the Spirit? I understand by being in the Spirit, in this text, meditation and prayer, putting up his petitions and supplications unto the throne of grace, for himself and his brethren, who were suffering the like treatment with himself; and, no doubt, for the preservation of the whole church.

II *Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, what thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.*

Here in this verse we have seven particular churches mentioned in Asia, that John was commanded to write unto, and inform them of those things that should befall them in the latter days.

Now we are not to understand by the number *seven* given here, that they were different churches concerning doctrine and discipline; for they were all planted by the apostle Paul; and we are well assured, that he taught and preached none other doctrine, than that one which he received from Jesus Christ. So we must conclude, that those seven churches were no more than different branches or societies of the self-same church, that Paul planted in those nations of the Gentile world. Neither are we to confine those things which John was commissioned to write unto these seven branches or societies alone, but unto the true church of Christ, which are scattered abroad in this world; for we are well assured, that there were many other parts of the world that this church of

Christ was planted in by the apostles, besides Asia.

12 And I turned to see the voice that spake with me, and being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks, &c.

From the beginning of this verse unto the 17th, John gives a description of this great vision which appeared unto him in the form of a man; and it appears to me to have been none other but our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in his glorified state. If we compare this with other texts, we shall find them all to agree and terminate in him who is the God of Israel, Exod. xxiv. 10. 'And they saw the God of Israel; and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of sapphire-stone, and as it were the body of heaven in clearness,' Dan. x. 5, 6. compared with Matth. xvii. 2. Luke ix. 29.; and for me to say any thing on these verses, would be to darken the text with words without knowledge.

17 And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead, and he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last.

Here in this verse John gives us to understand the effect this great vision had upon him, the very sight of which struck him to the ground, as one perfectly dead. And by what

means was he recovered? It was by the touch of his right hand, in which he holds the seven stars, and by the good words which he spake, saying, "Fear not; I am the first and the last." This last clause in the verse proves that it was no other that was speaking to John than God himself; for surely he is the first and the last of all things.

18 I am he that liveth and was dead; and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

As the last clause of the former verse proves that it was God that spake unto John, so the first clause of this verse proves, without a doubt, that it was Jesus Christ who spake to him; for God never was dead, nor never can die; but Christ actually was dead, and rose again, by his own almighty power. "And behold he liveth for evermore, Amen." And these two verses shew, that Jesus Christ is God equal with the Father, and hath the keys of hell and of death. Now we must take these words, "the keys of hell and of death," in two different senses.—In the prophecy in this text, I understand them in a comprehensive sense; for Christ tells us in Mat. xxviii. 18. that all power in heaven and in earth was given unto him; and elsewhere, that the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to

the Son. The word *keys* here signifies him sitting on the throne of his glory, adjudging the unbelievers to condemnation, and the believers unto life everlasting.

19 Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter.

Here John is commanded to write the things that he had seen. Now what are we to understand by these things? There are none of these things which John had seen mentioned here. To understand what is meant by the word *things*, we must apply our study to the sequel of the prophecy in this book. I understand by the things he had seen, to mean the outgoings of the gospel, which was propagated by himself and his brethren, the apostles, and spread far and wide, both amongst Jews and Gentiles; and likewise the persecution that followed after. These things John had both seen and felt. By the things which are, I understand the very persecution that John, with the rest of the church, was suffering at that time when he had this vision revealed unto him; and by the things which shall be hereafter, the same things. All the persecutions that the church was to suffer under the then reigning Pagan emperors, and even what she was to suffer in the Christian state of the Ro-

man empire ; and these sufferings were all but the beginning of her sorrows, comparatively with what she was to endure under the Antichristian state thereof. These are part of the things that John was commanded to write, as I understand them.

20 The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches ; and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest, are the seven churches.

Here, in this verse, he unfolds the mystery of the seven stars and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars, or angels, are the ministers of these seven branches. Now, as the Mosaic candlestick, and all its furniture were the same—all of it was one beaten work of pure gold ; so likewise this candlestick, under the gospel dispensation, which is the antitype of the former, is all the same—all of it is one pure doctrine of the faith of Jesus. And as the candlestick in the temple had seven lamps, so our Saviour takes occasion to show unto John, and the church by him, that wherever the church is planted, either by distance or space of time, it must be all of one piece. And as the church hath been planted in many distant parts, and will be planted in many more, unto a far greater extent, the Lord points it out here by the seven

candlesticks, which he calleth the seven churches, and giveth a definite number for an indefinite one. Now, as the seven lamps gave light in the temple, so these seven stars, or the ministers of the gospel, give light to the church, by opening up, and expounding the word of God. Nevertheless, Jesus Christ himself, the Sun of righteousness, holdeth the stars in his right hand, and whosoever walketh in the light of the Sun will have the less need of the star-light.

CHAP. II.

UNTO the angel of the church of Ephesus write; these things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks.

Here in this first verse it is to be noted, and observed with great attention, that St John wrote nothing unto the churches but what he was ordered and commanded by Jesus Christ. For in the beginning of all his epistles unto these seven Asiatic churches, he gives them to understand, that all which he wrote he had it by the expresse command and revelation of Jesus Christ, who is the Amen, the Son of God, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God, the first and the last of all things.

And it is likewise to be noted and observed,

that in the latter end of all these epistles, he informs them that he wrote by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit of God; which is a manifest proof that Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit are the two witnesses chiefly spoken of throughout all this prophecy, and particularly those two spoken of in the eleventh chapter.

2 I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them that are evil; and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles and are not, and hast found them liars.

We see here in this verse, that Jesus Christ orders John to let the church of Ephesus know, that he knows all their works; and he likewise begins his epistles to all the rest, "I know thy works." And how could it be otherwise? He must know their works, when he walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, and holds the seven stars in his right hand; who is the searcher of the heart, and trier of the reins of the children of men.

In this and the following verse, he gives a strong commendation of the angel of this church. What we are to understand by this angel trying those who say they are apostles and are not; but found them to be liars? As soon as the apostles of Christ preached the true doctrine of the forgiveness of sins by

faith in Jesus Christ alone, without the law, then the devil and Satan stirred up the unbelieving Jews, as they were scattered abroad every where in all the regions where the gospel was preached. These Judaizing teachers followed close on the heels of the apostles with their false doctrines, preaching up, that except they were circumcised and kept the law, they could not be saved. And as they denied Jesus Christ to be the true Messiah, and murdered and crucified him for an impostor and a cheat; so we may be sure they would do the same thing unto all them that confessed Jesus to be the Christ. And even many of the Jews which were converted to the Christian faith, and joined themselves unto the apostles, could not be persuaded but that the law of Moses was absolutely necessary to be kept, along with faith in Jesus Christ, to obtain salvation. And on the contrary, the apostles preached, that there was nothing necessary to obtain salvation but only faith in Jesus Christ. As the apostle Paul saith in Acts xiii. 39. "And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses." Here the disputes ran very high between these two parties; and how this angel or minister of Ephesus tried those that called themselves apostles, and were found liars, was by this very thing,—whether they believed in

Christ alone for salvation, or not? And they answering in the negative were found liars. For all they who do not adhere to this doctrine that the apostles taught, are said to be liars through all the scriptures of truth; and particularly in this book of visions: for it is said in this book, that all liars shall have their part in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone.

As those things happened to the church in its infancy, so they have been carried on by the devil and Satan, and his instruments, down until this present time; for the gospel was no sooner preached by the apostles, than he corrupted it with false doctrine on the one hand, and persecution on the other.

4 Nevertheless I have something against thee, because thou hast left thy first love, &c.

It appears, that this minister, and the church which he presided over, had fallen from their first faith, for wherever faith turns weak, love turns cold: for which Christ commands John to put him and them in remembrance from whence they were fallen—and repent, and do their first works. We may think it was no great fall to have left their first love; but it is an exceeding great fall, to fall from grace to the law. It is the falling from the ministration of life unto the ministration of death; and for this very fault he threatened to remove

their candlestick out of his place, except they repent. Repentance signifies a turning of the mind from error, or from dead works, to serve the living God, by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

6 But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

This error of the Nicolaitans hath given rise to many conjectures; but what it really was, I believe there are none can tell now in our day, for the text is silent concerning it, and so must I. Some expositors alledge that it was a plurality of wives; and was taught by one Nicholas, who was one of the seven deacons that were chosen at Jerusalem: but whether that be truth or not I cannot affirm.

7 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

To understand this first clause in a general sense, we must take in the whole scripture: so that the Spirit is the witness of God unto us by the dictation of the scriptures; and Jesus Christ is the other witness unto us by his manifestation in the human nature, and preaching the kingdom of heaven unto us in person; for no man hath seen God at any time, but

the only begotten Son of God, who was always in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him. But I understand this clause in a particular sense, and confined unto those things which then were, and unto the things which shall be hereafter, as we see the threatenings unto those that disobey the work of faith in the Son of God, which was about to be poured out upon those churches which left their first love, and which was pouring then upon them both by false doctrine and persecution. *Mal. iii. 3.* "And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver; that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness." Now the way that he refines his church, is, by leaving, and removing his candlestick from among them, when they fall away from their first love; and lets the devil loose among them with his ministers of darkness and error; and tries them by false doctrine, and errors of many different kinds, and fiery persecution of divers sorts; so that by all these he may purify his own church and people, and make them zealous of good works.

And unto them that stand fast in the faith of the gospel of Jesus Christ, as it was preached by the apostles, and received by them that overcometh—unto them he maketh the promise of himself. For all these figurative ex-

pressions, in these two chapters wherein is contained these seven epistles, unto these seven churches, means all one thing; such as, they shall eat of the tree of life—and shall not be hurt of the second death—and unto him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna. Christ is the bread of life that came down from heaven,—and I will give him a white stone. Now, Christ is the chief corner stone upon which the church is built,—and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth but he that receiveth it. This white stone, and this new name hath been tortured and turned topsy-turvy, and many conjectures and conclusions have been laid down about them; but if we take the scriptures for our guide, we shall find that the stone is Christ himself. In the twenty-eighth chapter of Isaiah, God saith, by the mouth of the prophet, “Behold I lay in Zion a chief corner stone.” Psalm cxviii. “The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner.” In 1st Peter ii. 4. to 9. you will find Christ made mention of by a living stone, no less than four times in these verses. And likewise that stone is plainly called Jesus Christ, in many other texts of scripture, you will find all those names given unto Christ; as in Num. xxiv. 17. Balaam calleth him a star and a sceptre which should rise out of Ja-

Job and Israel, and should smite the corners of Moab. And in 2 Peter i. 19. you will find him called, the day dawn, and the day star.

Now, as I do not mean to say much on the rest of these epistles that John wrote to the seven churches in Asia, farther than this, That we may know, when we read these epistles, what is the signification of all those names that are mentioned in them, and how to apply them. What is meant by the word *overcometh*, we will find in the 26th verse of this chapter, "He that overcometh, and keepeth my words unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations." Now, we see here, in this text, that it is not by our own works that we have power given us over the nations, but by keeping his works which he hath already done. And how can we keep his works but by believing in him? that he, the second person of the glorious Trinity, assumed our human nature, and came into this world in the fulness of time, and fulfilled all his heavenly Father's will, by doing whatsoever he had commanded him. And we find in Psalm cxix. 166. "Lord, I have hoped for thy salvation, and done thy commandments." Now we are not to apply this text, as many foolishly do, unto David, the son of Jesse; for whoever penned this psalm, did it by the inspiration of God, personating Jesus Christ: for we are

sure that neither David, nor any other man of the seed of Adam, ever kept God's commandments; but have broken them all most deadly. And in very deed the whole psalms speaketh of the person of Christ in general; for they cannot, with any propriety of speech, be applied to any other. And so are all these titles and names that we find in these epistles; they all terminate in him who is the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, and who is the faithful and true witness. Now, if any want more insight into the meaning of these epistles, they may peruse Mr Durham on the Revelation, and there they will get plenty of good matter, and explanations of these metaphorical expressions; and Newton on the Prophecies; and Mr Murray on the Revelation, who hath a whole volume on these epistles, written by St John unto these seven churches.

CHAP. III.

AND unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.

May not this text, with great propriety, be applied unto the church of Rome in her degenerate state? For ever since the pope arose,

and took upon him the supremacy of the church, he hath shined in the eyes of this world as the only living church upon earth. But here we are informed by truth itself, that he is actually dead. And I think it may be applied to all degenerate churches which holdeth not Jesus Christ their Lord and Head, in both their spiritual and temporal concerns; "for he is made head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." Eph. i. 22, 23.

2 Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found thy works perfect before God. 3 Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If, therefore, thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.

Here is an admonition given unto the church of Sardis, and through her to all degenerate churches, to be watchful of those things that remain that are ready to die. I understand the word things to mean, faith in Jesus Christ; for he saith "I have not found thy works perfect before God." Now, without faith there can be no perfect works. In the 3d verse, Christ exhorts this church to remember how she heard and had received the word

of truth taught by the apostles; and that was (Rom. x. 9.) "this word of faith which we preach; if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." This is the great and glorious truth that all the apostles taught by the Holy Ghost speaking in them; and it is by this doctrine, and it alone, that works are made good and perfect.

In verses 4th and 5th we have a very gracious promise given unto those who have not defiled their garments, and have overcome. Now, the same Divine that had these visions revealed to him, informs us, in his first epistle, chap. v. 4. what it is that overcometh; he saith, in the latter clause of that verse—our faith. Now according to the scriptures, it is Jesus Christ himself that hath overcome the devil, the world, and the flesh, in his own person.

And therefore we must look unto him with a believing heart, who finished that great work of our salvation on the cross; and in so doing he is made of God unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and complete redemption; for he himself bore our sins in his own body on the tree. Now, as our sins and iniquities were transferred upon him, the consequence is, that his righteousness and holiness are im-

puted unto the believer in Jesus; and therefore it is this faith in him alone that overcometh.

There might be a great deal more said on these texts, but I must confess, that neither my time nor talents are adequate for the task.

6 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

Here, in this verse, we are taught who we are to hear; it is not St John, the beloved disciple, but it is the Spirit of truth, which spake by him. Now this is a warning to all to take good heed whom they hear; for if they speak not according to the spirit of the law and testimony, it is because there is no truth in them; and if any preach any other doctrine than this Spirit teaches, we are forbidden to bid them God speed.

From the beginning of verse 7th unto the 14th verse, we have a very great commendation of the church of Philadelphia, for keeping God's word, and not denying his name. And further down in the 10th verse, he calls "it the word of my patience;" therefore he gives his promise that he will keep thee free from the hour of temptation. "And I will make him that overcometh a pillar in the temple of my God." What I understand by *temple*, must be Christ himself, for all the fulness of the Godhead dwelleth in him bodily: and I under-

stand by the word *pillar*, that all true believers are made members of that mystical body of Christ; for we are members of his body, of his flesh, -and of his bones, says an inspired apostle.

In the 11th verse he saith, "hold fast that which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." I understand here in this verse, we are admonished to hold fast the truth of that doctrine that was taught by Christ himself and his apostles; for if we depart from it, and give heed unto seducing spirits, and false doctrine, we will assuredly lose our crown. And whosoever he be that leadeth thee aside from the truth of the gospel of Christ, it is he that taketh and robbeth thee of thy crown, and maketh himself none the better; for he will never enjoy that crown by teaching false doctrine, but bring upon himself swift destruction.

14 *And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God.*

Here in this text we have great and glorious names and titles given unto Jesus Christ. Now all these names and titles that are given here, and in every text where John addresses all those churches in Asia, must be those names that Christ will write upon all his spiritual

feed. For, as Christ is the Head, so all the members of his body must bear the name and title of the head. Now, as Christ is called here in this text, the faithful and true witness, so it was prophesied of him long before he came in the flesh, Isaiah lv. 4. "Behold I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people."

15 *I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot; I would thou wert cold or hot.*

16 *So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.*

What I understand by this church being neither cold nor hot, may be learned from the ancient church of Israel in king Ahab's time, when the people halted between two opinions, 1 Kings xviii. 21. "And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him." Likewise we find in the prophet Zephaniah, a people that swear by the Lord, and that swear by Malcham. So this church of the Laodiceans hath adhered partly to Christ by faith, and partly to their own works; which, I fear, is too much the case at this day amongst ourselves. But let us mark the doom which is denounced against this church, and let us fear

stand by the word *pillar*, that all true believers are made members of that mystical body of Christ; for we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones, says an inspired apostle.

In the 11th verse he saith, "hold fast that which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." I understand here in this verse, we are admonished to hold fast the truth of that doctrine that was taught by Christ himself and his apostles; for if we depart from it, and give heed unto seducing spirits, and false doctrine, we will assuredly lose our crown. And whosoever he be that leadeth thee aside from the truth of the gospel of Christ, it is he that taketh and robbeth thee of thy crown, and maketh himself none the better; for he will never enjoy that crown by teaching false doctrine, but bring upon himself swift destruction.

14 *And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God.*

Here in this text we have great and glorious names and titles given unto Jesus Christ. Now all these names and titles that are given here, and in every text where John addresses all those churches in Asia, must be those names that Christ will write upon all his spiritual

feed. For, as Christ is the Head, so all the members of his body must bear the name and title of the head. Now, as Christ is called here in this text, the faithful and true witness, so it was prophesied of him long before he came in the flesh, Isaiah lv. 4. "Behold I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people."

15 *I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot; I would thou wert cold or hot.*

16 *So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.*

What I understand by this church being neither cold nor hot, may be learned from the ancient church of Israel in king Ahab's time, when the people halted between two opinions, 1 Kings xviii. 21. "And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him." Likewise we find in the prophet Zephaniah, a people that swear by the Lord, and that swear by Malcham. So this church of the Laodiceans hath adhered partly to Christ by faith, and partly to their own works; which, I fear, is too much the case at this day amongst ourselves. But let us mark the doom which is denounced against this church, and let us fear

lest it come home to ourselves in a very awful manner.

Now let us apply the character of this church unto ourselves.—We have established churches in this nation, and we have many Dissenters from these churches, and we have a very fair and fine shew of righteousness and holiness; and yet neither ministers nor people can agree amongst themselves. This is not like the church in the apostles days, when they were all of one heart, and one mind, glorifying God, by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, looking with a single eye unto Christ by faith for all their salvation in and through him alone; not by their own righteousness or holiness, but by him who died for our sins, and rose again for our justification, and who hath, by his own blood, entered into that within the veil, and hath obtained eternal redemption for us. Now this most glorious person is our most glorious head and surety; and whosoever receives him as a free donation and gift from God our Father, without any of their own qualifications or good works, as they are termed, they may assure themselves they shall never be ashamed. As for myself, I lay all my works, and all my evil deeds, in one promiscuous heap, as filthy abominable rags; and run from them as a menstrous cloth, and fly into the arms of my crucified Saviour Jesus Christ; for he is the

Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world; and consequently taketh away my sin, when I am enabled, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, to lay hold on him by faith; for I am fully persuaded that what he hath promised, he is also able and willing to perform, or else he had never died such an ignominious death on the cross.

17 Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.

Hear what the Spirit saith unto this church of the Laodiceans: This church saith that she is rich; rich in what? in good works no doubt. But the context shews us that she was only lukewarm; and therefore he would spue her out of his mouth, or raze her name out of the book of life.

But what saith the Spirit of truth? "Thou knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." *Isaiah xxix. 16.* "Surely your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter's clay." *Luke xviii. 11.* "The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican." *verse 12.* "I fast twice in the week, I give tithes

of all that I have." Prov. xiii. 7. "There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing, there is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches." By these texts above, I am inclined to think that this church of Laodicea had a very great shew of external works, while, in the mean time, the one thing needful was neglected, which was faith in Jesus Christ.

18 I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness may not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see.

In this verse there are three things this church is admonished to do, and that is, to buy gold, white raiment, and eye salve. I understand gold to mean the blood of Jesus Christ, which he shed when he was tried in the fire of the wrath of almighty God for our sins; and raiment, his unspotted righteousness which he procured for us, by fulfilling the divine law in our room and stead; and by eye salve, I think is meant the Holy Spirit. Now, if we have not these three particulars, we are still in our old father Adam; and the scripture informeth us, while we remain in that state, and no more, we are dead in trespasses

and sin. But when we are washed from our sins in his blood, and clothed with his righteousness, and led by the Spirit of God unto all truth, we are the sons of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, crying, Abba, Father. And all this glorious privilege is obtained by faith in the Son of God. "For this is life eternal to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." And Christ saith, the flesh profiteth nothing, but my words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. Now by the word flesh I understand is meant all that a man can do with his natural powers, or even with his spiritual endowments; even all these profiteth nothing in the point of justification. The critic may cavil here, and say, what, can I do nothing with my spiritual endowments? doth not the inspired apostle say, "through Christ strengthening me I can do all things?" It is a truth, the apostle saith so; but we must understand here that the apostle's meaning is, that he can do all things that a mere man can do. But justification is not the work of a man; it is above his reach, for it is the work of God alone. For the same apostle informeth us, that it is God that justifies, and who shall condemn? Now, whosoever pretends to justify himself, with all his endowments, sets

himself in a perfect opposition against God, and he may dread the consequence.

19 *As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Be zealous, therefore, and repent.*

What I understand by repentance, is a turning of the heart and mind from these works of the flesh spoken to above; that is, from all that is termed good works, as well as our evil deeds, and cleave with full purpose of heart unto Christ Jesus by faith, as he hath revealed himself unto us in his word. And then follows that gracious promise which is recorded in the next verse.

20 *Behold I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.*

In this text there is a free and indefinite call to every man—that must be a free call to all the sons of Adam, as we have it in the last chapter of this book, “whosoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely.” It may be inquired what is meant by the word *door*; I understand it to be the opening of our heart, with all its rational faculties, to receive Christ by faith. And as he stands and knocks, it must be in his word, for we can know nothing what God is unto us, but as Jesus Christ hath declared him unto us in his revealed word; and therefore,

I think any person who pretends to know any thing of God's love towards the fallen sons of Adam, by any other thing which is not recorded in the scriptures of truth, is most certainly under a gross delusion.

We may see and understand what is meant by opening the door, Psalm xxiv. 7. 9. "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in." I know that some commentators of note have applied this text unto the gates and doors of the material temple, and so they may typically; but I think it applies spiritually unto the hearts of men. On the substance of these two last verses, I have given my judgment elsewhere in this book.

CHAP. IV.

AFTER this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven; and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.

After John had got the former vision, in which was contained the admonitions and threatenings that he was ordered to send to these seven churches in Asia, which concludeth with the end of the third chapter; here, in the beginning of this chapter, he hath another scene opened unto him. "After this I

looked, and behold a door was opened in heaven." Whether by this heaven spoken of here, and the door opened in it, is meant the material heavens above us, or the church of Christ, is a question among divines. But I understand it to mean the church of Christ. And as for the voice that he heard in this vision, it is the same that he heard in the former one; for they are both represented by John by the same similitude of a trumpet, which said, "Come up hither;" signifying, that he was to be shown more into the mystery of the dispensation of God's providence towards his church, in the latter days. I do not think that John was removed from the isle of Patmos, during all the time of these visions being revealed to him.

2 And immediately I was in the Spirit; and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne.

"And immediately I was in the Spirit." This phrase signifieth a strong and supernatural impulse of the Spirit of God acting upon his intellectual faculties, which is called being in the Spirit. Hereby John is in the same state as Balaam speaketh of—falling into a trance and having his eyes open, when he saw the visions of the Almighty; and with the apostle Peter, when he fell into a trance, and saw the vision

concerning the calling of the Gentiles into the church—"And, behold, a throne was set in Heaven, and one sat on the throne." This one that sat on the throne must have been our Lord Jesus Christ in his glorified state, represented as surrounded with all his train of glorified servants, which is enumerated in the following verses.

3 *And he that sat was, to look upon, like a jasper and a sardine stone; and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald.*

Here we have Christ represented as a most fine stone. As to the nature of this stone, I will not take upon me to expound; but I will venture to say, that he who is represented by it is altogether lovely, and the chief among ten thousand. "And a rainbow round about the throne, like unto an emerald." The rainbow is an emblem of peace unto the sons of men; as the Lord gave unto Noah in the covenant he made with him, and ratified it by setting his bow in the clouds, that he would destroy the earth no more by water for man's sake.

4 *And round about the throne were four and twenty seats; and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.*

This verse alludes to the twelve patriarchs under the Jewish dispensation, and the twelve apostles under the gospel dispensation; and the white raiment alludes to and signifieth the pure and unspotted righteousness of Jesus Christ. The crown of gold signifieth his most glorious holiness with which he crowneth them, and not them only, but all they that overcome the devil and the world, by faith in him that is able to save to the uttermost. These four verses figure out unto us, Jesus Christ sitting on the throne of his glory, having all power in heaven and on earth committed unto him, surrounded with all his holy regalia of angels, ready to execute all his commands for the good of his church and people.

5 And out of the throne proceeded lightnings, and thunderings, and voices; and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God.

In this verse the scene is changed. I understand the lightnings, and the thunderings, and the voices, to signify great trials that the church was to undergo; all the false doctrine that she was to be pestered with by false brethren, that should creep in unawares, and deceive, if it were possible, the very elect. And the great persecution which she was to suffer

from that time until the end of Antichrist's reign. "And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God." On this last clause of the verse, there have been many different opinions. Some will have it to signify the one essential Spirit of God, but mentioned here in the plural number. But why should the Spirit be mentioned here in the plural number, more than in any other text of scripture, when through all the New Testament he is always mentioned in the singular number? as in Eph. iv. 4. "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling." And in the first epistle to the Corinthians, chap. xii. throughout, you will find that all the gifts that are given to the church of Christ are wrought by that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will: and in the 29th and 30th verses of this chapter, we find seven different gifts given to the church; and this I understand to be the meaning of the number seven; that is, concerning the blessings and gifts given unto the church of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

But here, in this text before us, where the seven spirits are represented by seven lamps of fire, I understand to be a quite different thing: For, mostly, wherever the Lord represents

himself by fire, it generally denotes great indignation and sore judgments, as you will find in ch. xiv. 10. of this book of Revelation, and likewise in ch. xvii. 16. and xix. 12. 20. of this same book, and in many other texts. So by the seven lamps of fire, which are here called the seven spirits of God, I understand the meaning to allude to the book sealed with seven seals, which none in heaven or earth could open, but the Lamb which was in the midst of the throne; and more particularly to the seven angels which are to sound the seven trumpets, and to the other seven angels which are to pour out the seven last plagues of the wrath of God upon the earth and its inhabitants, for the neglect and contempt of the true gospel which Christ taught himself, and was propagated by these blessings and gifts, which he gave unto his apostles. And men rejecting the gospel, they fell into innumerable ways of worship, after their own imaginations, as the world witnesseth at this day, and hath done all along. But all these traditions and commandments of men are to perish in the using thereof; for God will not be mocked by any of his creatures, no, not by the triple crown of Rome, nor by all the mitred caps they can produce; nor yet by our Lords spiritual or temporal; nor yet by our General Assemblies of Presbyterians, if any or

all of them depart from the law and the testimony.

6 *And before the throne there was a sea of glass, like unto chrystal; and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind.*

I understand by the sea of glass here to be meant the church of Christ; for as it is before the throne, so is the church; and as it is like unto chrystal, so is the true church clear and transparent, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.

As to the last clause of this verse, it seems to be very dark and intricate. But in my humble opinion, it manifests in a figurative way unto us the dispensations of God's providence unto his church and people, and likewise unto his enemies; for in the opening of the four first seals, those four beasts are employed calling on John to come and see. And, indeed, I think they represent the all-seeing eye of God, which runs to and fro, and beholds all the children of men; for it is said, they are full of eyes, before and behind. We have a very grand and lofty description of the same four beasts, in the 1st chapter of Ezekiel's prophecy throughout, and in the last verse the prophet concludes with "this was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord." And

in the 24th verse, the prophet gives us a description of the noise which those creatures made, "And when they went, I heard the noise of their wings, like the noise of great waters, as the voice of the Almighty, the voice of speech, as the noise of an host."

7 And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle.

This text seemeth to be very dark and mysterious; but, as I said before, I think it represents unto us the providence of God, vested in the person of Jesus Christ. We have it represented here by earthly figures, first as a lion, which is king of the quadruped tribe, who is fierce, valiant, and strong, and who turneth not away from any of his enemies until he destroy them—"for who can stay his hand, or say unto him, what dost thou?" Secondly, we have it represented as a calf or ox, that is slow, strong, and durable, that performs his work with deliberation; even so Jesus Christ will perform his work, his great work of wonders among the sons of men, with the greatest ease and deliberation; knowing that all he doth is in truth and righteousness. Thirdly, we have it represented as having the face of a man. Now, as man is the chief of God's

workmanship in this lower world; and is endowed with reasonable faculties to discern good from evil; even so is Christ endowed both with the nature of God and the nature of man; and, consequently, he must be endowed with all possible perfection, for he is the wisdom of God, and the power of God, and he performs the works of God in justice, wisdom, and equity, both in the providence of grace and of justice. Fourthly, It is represented like a flying eagle. Now, as the eagle is reckoned the king of the winged fowls, strong and swift, and darts upon his prey with great celerity and undaunted courage, even so will Christ dart on his enemies, and destroy them, when they least think of it; for he comes as a thief in the night, and who shall abide his coming? None but those who are covered with his righteousness, and washed from their sins in his blood.

8 *And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him, and they were full of eyes within; and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.*

I understand by the first clause of this verse concerning the six wings, that they represent unto us the *omnipresence* of Jesus Christ, as Lord of heaven and earth, and is every where

present, seeing and performing all the will of God, both towards his church and people, in grace and mercy; and likewise towards his enemies, in justice and equity, giving every one as their work shall be. The second clause, concerning being full of eyes within, I think, represents unto us the *omniscience* of Christ; for it is said in the 6th verse, that they were full of eyes before and behind; which points from the centre of time unto both its ends. So here, in this verse, it represents, that he seeth and is well acquainted with all the secret counsel of God; for, as the apostle saith, “no man knoweth the mind of man, but the spirit of man that is in him,” so no man knoweth the mind and counsel of God, but the Spirit of God. Now Jesus Christ hath the Spirit of God poured into him without measure, therefore he must be acquainted with all the counsels of God from all eternity. Also, the last clause of this verse, “and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty,” figuratively represents unto us the glory that Jesus Christ always gives unto God, by fulfilling all his will in truth and righteousness, as his most righteous servant.

9 *And when those beasts give glory, and honour, and thanks, to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, 10 The four and*

twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, 11 Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

Now, we see here in the beginning of these three verses, that when those beasts gave glory, and honour, and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, that, as I said before, and still think, it is Jesus Christ represented by these four beasts: for we cannot *suppose* that there are any such beasts in heaven, so we are *sure* that there are none in the true church here below. And, as Jesus Christ hath all power in heaven and earth committed unto him, to execute the will and counsel of God, so he may represent himself in what figures or emblems he pleaseth, in the execution of God's providence towards his church. As he is always working the will of God in his providence, so he takes the lead in giving glory unto God; and we see that the church, which is represented here by the four and twenty elders, followeth, by their casting their crowns before the throne, and worshipping him that liveth for ever and ever. And we see, in the 11th verse, what the tenor

of their song is ; “ Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and thanks ; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.” This is a song of glory and praise for creation and preservation, executed, in the providence of God, by Jesus Christ, in whom he worketh all things, according to the pleasure of his own will.

C H A P. V.

AND I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne, a book, written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals.

After Jesus Christ had given John a description of himself in the preceding chapters, in all these figurative representations which are mentioned in them, he here represents himself as he is,—God, seated on his throne of glory, with a book sealed in his right hand. Now, if we compare this text with Daniel’s vision, chap. xii. 9. we see there that the words are closed up and sealed until the time of the end ; and from that period we have no account of these words being loosed or unsealed until this time, that he that had closed and sealed them up was pleased to loose and open the seals thereof, and disclose all the wonders of God’s providence towards his church and peo-

ple, in grace and mercy unto them, and his indignation towards his enemies.

2 And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? &c.

Here is a proclamation issued forth by a strong angel, from him that sat on the throne, unto the sons of men, to see if there were any of them that could open the book, or even look thereon; but they were all nonplussed and mute, there were none among the sons of Adam that were found worthy or able to open the book, or display the mysteries of God's providence contained therein, as we have it in the 3d verse.

4 And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon.

Here John was very much grieved at his heart, which caused him to weep bitterly, because the contagion of sin had infected the whole race of the human kind, and rendered them unworthy either to open the book, or yet to look thereon; so we ought all to mourn and weep with John for the depravity that sin has spread into the hearts of the sons of men; and say unto ourselves, "Not unto us, but unto thee, O Lord, be the praise and glory;

for it is not for our worthiness, but of thy great mercy and grace, that thou hast revealed thyself unto us both in the works of creation and redemption.

5 And one of the elders saith to me, Weep not ; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.

Here, in this verse, the prophet is comforted with the good news that there was one found who was both worthy and able to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. The elder points out this one who was worthy to open the book, with a note of observation, "Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David." Now, it is granted by all, that this person, represented by a lion in this text, who prevailed to open the book, was no other than our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and why may he not be represented in the 4th chapter by the four beasts, as well as he is here by a lion? and by the Root of David, as he is by a Lamb in the following verse? I can see no impropriety in applying the one as well as the other. He is here represented as a lion; that is, strong both to defend his church and destroy his enemies. By the Root of David, he is represented as the Creator and Preserver of all mankind, but more particularly his own

church and people, as the apostle Paul defines him in the 11th chapter of the Romans, where he calls him the root of the olive tree, into which the Gentiles were grafted.

6 And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb, as it had been slain, having seven horns, and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

Here, in this verse, Christ is represented as a Lamb that had been slain, with seven horns. Horns, in the scripture language, always signifies power; so this Lamb is invested with all power in heaven and in earth. "And seven eyes." Now, as it is said in the preceding chapter, that the four beasts were full of eyes before and behind, and again, that they were full of eyes within; and as the seven lamps of fire burning before the throne are called the seven spirits of God; so here, in this text, the seven eyes are called the seven spirits of God, sent forth into all the earth. Now, when all these figures are collected and compared together, they exactly harmonize, and correspond, and terminate in the once slaughtered, but now risen and glorified, person of our Lord and Redeemer Jesus Christ. And the seven spirits of God, sent forth into all the earth, signifies, and points directly unto the

opening of the seven seals, and the sounding of the seven trumpets, together with the pouring out of the seven vials, full of the seven last plagues of the wrath of God, upon the earth.

7 And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne. 8 And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints.

In these two verses, we see that the four beasts, as I said before, always take the lead in giving glory to God and the Lamb. Here an objection may be raised against the four beasts being a representation of Christ the Lamb, when it is said here, in this text, that they fall down before him; but this objection will soon be removed, if we understand Jesus Christ in his twofold nature, and in his mediatorial offices. As he is God equal with the Father, he receives all the same glory with the Father; but as he is Mediator betwixt God and man, in the great work of man's redemption, he becomes God's righteous servant, and so gives all the glory unto God, which is due unto his great and holy name. Now, if any want to know what way or how Christ gives all his glory unto God the Father,—he gives

it, first, by faith in him; for he always had a full assurance of faith in his God, as he declares unto his disciples in the garden. He told them that they would leave him alone; and yet he tells them that he is not alone, for "the Father is with me." And even on the cross he calls him his God, still adhering and cleaving unto God by faith, as his God. Secondly, Christ gives his glory unto God the Father, by finishing that great work which God the Father had given him to do. If any want farther information, I shall refer them to the 17th chapter of John's gospel, throughout.

9 *And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; 10 And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. &c.*

From the 8th verse to the end of the chapter is contained a doxology of praise and glory unto the Lamb, for the redemption of man. We see, in the 8th verse, the four beasts and the elders begin; and in the 11th verse, an innumerable company of angels join the chorus, saying, (in the 12th verse) with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and

strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." And, in the 13th verse, it is still continued by all the creatures which are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and in the sea. And in the 14th verse, "and the four beasts said, amen." Christ is the Amen, the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, the beginning and the end. Now, we are taught in the scriptures, that none of the imperfect prayers or praises of men can enter heaven, except Jesus Christ says *amen* to them, and perfumes them with his own incense.

Now, to prove and illustrate that Jesus Christ is represented unto us in all these figures that are recorded from the beginning of these visions, unto the end of this chapter, it will appear very clear and plain from other texts of scripture. First, If we consider what the tabernacle represented under the Jewish dispensation: Did not that tabernacle, with its furniture, and instruments, and its fashion which was given unto Moses on Mount Sinai, by God himself, represent Christ our Saviour? And did not the Lord give Moses a strict command to look that he made them after the pattern which was shewn him in the mount? You may read the 25th chapter of Exodus throughout, and the chapters following, and if these things did not signify some better things than themselves, it will be a very hard

question to answer what they were for, unto the children of Israel. For we are well assured, that these things could never take away sin, nor make the comers thereunto perfect; and without perfection, both in righteousness and holiness, there can be no acceptance with God unto any of the sons of men. The apostle, in Colossians ii. 8. bids his converts beware lest any man spoil them through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. Now, the tabernacle, with all its furniture, was nothing more than the traditions of men; for although it was built by the command of God, and according to the pattern that he gave unto Moses on the mount, yet it was done and wrought by men; therefore it was only a worldly sanctuary pitched by man and not God. Now, the apostle to the Hebrews, ch. viii. 2. maketh mention of a minister of the sanctuary, and the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man. And in Col. ii. 16, 17. he says, "Let no man, therefore, judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holiday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days, which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ." Now Christ being the body and substance of all these things that are recorded unto us in the

Jewish dispensation, and as the justification and salvation of the believing Jews were accomplished by him, and not by the types and figures which were only a representation of him; then I think we have good reason to apply all these figurative expressions that have given us in these five chapters of this book of his Revelation, unto him and none else; for there are none other, either in heaven or on earth, that can, or will, answer all these figures but himself alone; for he is all in all, the very centre, life, and soul of all things.

CHAP. VI.

AND I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see.

Now as to this noise that John heard, of the first beast like unto thunder, I think the meaning must be the going forth of the gospel; for, although the gospel be of itself a still small voice, clear as chrystal, and pure as water, yet, when it went out into the world, both of Jews and Gentiles, by the preaching of the apostles, it became like a body of pure water falling into a lake of fire; and every one knows what a great noise these two elements make when they meet in opposition, one against the other. Now whoever reads the

Acts of the Apostles, may see what a noise and clamour the Scribes and Pharisees raised against the apostles of Jesus Christ and his gospel, in the city of Jerusalem, and throughout all the Gentile nations where they were scattered abroad ; and how the Gentiles joined them in opposition to the truth, and persecuted them from city to city. But this noise was not altogether occasioned by men ; for the apostle saith, “ We do not wrestle with flesh and blood, but with spiritual wickedness in high places, to the pulling down of strong holds ” which the devil hath implanted in the hearts of men. Now while this strong man armed keeps the house, his goods are secure ; but when a stronger than he comes, and spoils him of his armour, and binds him, then he (viz. Jesus Christ) spoils all his goods : And then the devil, who is a sworn enemy to Christ and all they that adhere to him and his gospel, begins to roar, and makes a terrible noise.

We see in the former visions John heard voices, but they were plain and loud as of a trumpet talking unto him ; but here it is as the voice of thunder, which appears to have been a very confused noise.

2 *And I saw, and behold a white horse ; and he that sat on him had a bow ; and a crown was given unto him : and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.*

In the first verse John heard a voice bidding him come and see; and in this second verse he tells us what he did see, with a note of observation, "Behold, a white horse." I understand by the white horse to be meant the gospel preached by the apostles. "And he that sat upon him had a bow." I understand this *he* to be Jesus Christ, and the bow denotes him to be a man of war, and wherewith he was to conquer his enemies. "And a crown was given unto him." This crown being given unto Jesus Christ, proves that he hath conquered and overcome all his enemies; for he spoiled principalities and powers, and made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it, (that is, in his own glorious person.) Now Jesus Christ hath two ways of conquering his enemies. The first is, by the word and power of his grace; and the other by the word and power of his wrath and indignation, against incorrigible sinners that will not listen and hear the sweet calls of his grace, manifested and held out to them in the everlasting gospel. Now, as to the last clause of this verse, "he went forth conquering and to conquer," it is a manifest truth that Jesus Christ conquered all his enemies on the cross, where he laid down his life for his sheep, as he calls them. One would be ready to think that his sufferings and warfare were at an end

when he bowed his blessed head and gave up the ghost ; but this text tells us, that even after his ascension, he went forth conquering and to conquer. Now, as Christ rose from the dead, and ascended up into heaven, and sat down on his Father's throne, and hath all power in heaven and earth committed unto him, we are well assured that he neither conquers nor suffers any more on this earth, in his own person ; but we are well assured that he conquers by his word and Spirit, and that he suffers in his members when they are persecuted from city to city, and killed for adhering to the word of his grace. And this is the prophecy that reaches unto the end of time, for while Christ hath members of his body on this earth, he will be conquering them by his word and Spirit. And while there are corrupt men on the earth to persecute his church, he will be suffering in his members. And likewise he will still be conquering his incorrigible enemies, that will not receive him for their Lord and Saviour, by faith in him as the Son of God, by delivering them over unto the law of Moses, which is the ministration of condemnation unto all the sons of Adam that are not clothed with Christ's righteousness, and washed from their sins in his blood.

3 And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see. 4 And

there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon, to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.

At the opening of this second seal, there went out a horse that was red; which denotes and points out much blood to be shed by the sword. The second clause, "and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth." This must denote and signify the old serpent, the dragon, who is stiled in scripture, "the accuser of the brethren," and all they that are actuated by his spirit.

This clause, and the following one, do not so much signify the persecution of the church, as it signifieth wars and bloodshed among the emperors and kings of the earth among themselves; for it is said that "he shall take peace from the earth." Now the church is never meant by the word *earth* in all these visions. Third clause, "And that they should kill one another." Now this clause points out who they were to kill—it is those sons of the earth. And whosoever readeth the Roman history, will see what havock these *butchers of men* made even among themselves, over and above the deluge of blood they shed, by conquering foreign kings and kingdoms, and engrossing them under their own yoke. The last clause,

“And there was given unto him a great sword.” This likewise signifies bloodshed in open wars by the sword, which are *just and necessary*, as these sons of the earth would have it; but how their just and necessary wars agree with the sixth commandment, *thou shalt not kill*, I shall leave unto themselves to define. This prophecy is not confined to the Roman empire in its Pagan state, as many of our expositors explain it; but it reaches unto the end of the vision, and that is unto the end of the 19th chapter of this book of Revelation. Now it is plain and clear that this prophecy will last as long as Antichrist reigns. For hath not these ten horns been butchering and killing one another ever since they gave their power unto the beast? And, if I can believe my own senses, they are throng at work at this present day, fulfilling this very prophecy, and in so doing becomes the very image of Rome in her Pagan state.

5 *And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse, and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand.*

“And I beheld, and, lo, a black horse.” This appears to me to signify darkness and ignorance that soon eclipsed the glorious gospel after the death of the apostles, and in a great measure continues to this day.

The last clause, "and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand." By balances I understand the great disputes that took place between the Pagans and Christians, concerning their religion, and likewise the Jews. These disputes did not only exist between the Christians, Jews, and Pagans, but, what is much to be lamented, they took place and existed among the Christians themselves, at least among those who professed the Christian name. And so these balances are employed even unto this very day. How many volumes of controversial books have been wrote by one denomination against another? And yet they are all true Christians! If it had held with only words and writings it had been well; but men who profess the name of Christ, butchering and killing one another in open and avowed wars; and above all, to insist, both in words and writings, that these wars are *just* and *necessary*, which is most shocking unto any man who reads the New Testament, and believeth when he reads it, that it is the word of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who is truth itself and cannot lie. And what divisions have taken place among those people who call themselves Christians, since the apostles days; and consequently these balances have been used with one party against another, in disputes, and arguments, and controversies, grop-

ing in midnight darkness and error, even when the light of the glorious gospel shineth as the noon-day.

The inquisitive reader, no doubt, will expect a definition of the *true gospel*; but as I do not mean to enter into any disputes here, I shall recommend unto him to search the scriptures of truth, by meditation, and prayer, and supplication, that the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the God of Glory, may give unto him the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the knowledge of Jesus Christ; for he saith, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; and no man can come unto the Father but by me." And it is said "that the way-faring men, though fools, shall not err therein."

6 *And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.*

I understand this verse to have no connection either with what goeth before or after it; for it seemeth to me to have a quite different tendency. The voice mentioned here comes not from any one of the four beasts, but it is in the *midst* of the four beasts that are in the throne of God; for the four beasts surround the throne. And what says the voice? "A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny." I understand by

wheat and barley here, in this text, to mean the whole production of the ground for the sustenance of man and beast ; and a command given unto these horses and their riders not to hurt the oil and the wine. The whole of this verse amounts to this, that, in the midst of all these wars, commotions, and distresses of nations, the Lord would send, in his righteous judgment, upon the men of this world, for the despising and rejecting Jesus Christ and his gospel—the earth will still produce its fruits in abundance for the support of man and beasts that are upon it.

7 And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see. 8 And I looked, and behold, a pale horse, and his name that sat on him was Death, and hell followed with him : and power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with the sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.

In these verses I understand to be meant the persecution of the saints in all its horror and tyranny; and I understand the pale horse to mean sin. Now, as death and hell always follow sin, so here, in this text, they are all three coupled together ; and, in the next clause, power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth.

We must understand sin, death, and hell,

here, in this text, to represent men, and them to be tyrants; which points out unto us the then reigning Roman emperors, and all their underlings that took part with them in opposing the gospel, and persecuting its professors; and not only them, but also all those who follow their pernicious footsteps. Now, we see here, by this text, that neither sin, death, nor hell, nor all these tyrannical men, had power to hurt any of the professors of the gospel, till such time as it was given unto them by Christ himself; for he it is alone that "hath the keys of hell and of death, and that openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth."

"Over the fourth part of the earth." This, I think, may mean Europe; for I believe there have been more men put to death for the sake of the gospel in it, than in all the world beside. "To kill with the sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth." This points out to us the many various ways these tyrants took to kill the saints; some with the sword cutting them in pieces, some with pineing, and pinching hunger, and some with death. What is here meant by death I am at a loss to know; but I suppose the word *death*, in this place, means the many ways that these tyrants took to torment men with excruciating pains, before they kill.

ed them outright; such as racking them on wheels, crucifying them, roasting them on gridirons over slow fires, and burning them at stakes; together with many other ways they practised, making them suffer an hundred deaths in suffering one. "And with the beasts of the earth." That is, making gladiators of them, setting them in confined places, and letting loose wild ravenous beasts upon them to tear them in pieces, and to make sport to the beholders. Or it may rather mean those tyrants themselves, which are called here, in this text, the beasts of the earth; for, indeed, they are more cruel towards their fellow creatures, than the most ravenous beast that the earth produces.

9 *And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held.*

Here, in this verse, John saw the souls of them that were slain. How he saw the souls of men that had departed this life, we are entirely at a loss to conceive. They might be represented unto him in bodily shapes, in this great vision. And I think this is the most likely conjecture we can put upon it; for it is merely impossible for us, while we are in this body, to see any spirit or soul, unless it be covered with some material body. He informs

us, that they were slain for the Word of God— Now whether is meant by the *word of God*, Jesus Christ, the essential Word of God, or the Holy Scriptures, which reveal that essential word unto us? I think this text comprehends them both; for Jesus Christ is the essential Word of God. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God,” John i. 1. Again, “Then I was by him as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable parts of this earth, and my delight was with the sons of men.” Proverbs viii. 30. and 31. These texts, with many more that might be produced, prove that the Word of God in this text, is to be understood of Jesus Christ himself, as the true and essential Word of God, co-equal and co-eternal with the Father.

“And for the testimony which they held.” This testimony means the written word delivered, which reveals unto us Jesus Christ, our God and Saviour, who redeemed us with his own precious blood, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot. Jesus saith unto the Jews, “Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they that testify of me.” Now this testimony is revealed and held out unto us by the word of God, confirmed with his oath, and sealed with

own precious blood ; for God purchased his church with his own blood ; and this is the testimony that these souls who were slain held fast unto the death.

10 *And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth ?*

Here is a prayer and supplication put up unto the Lord for judgment and vengeance upon these blood-thirsty men that dwell on the earth, and persecute Christ and his church. And here we have a strong warrant to pray for the downfall of Antichrist, and of all that oppose Jesus Christ and his gospel. And we see in the following verse, that their prayer was answered, by giving them white robes, and bidding them rest until the Lord's own time should come.

12 *And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake ; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood.*

“ And, lo, there was a great earthquake.” Earthquakes always denote, in this book of visions, great changes taking place in the wheel of God's providence upon this earth, among the sons of men. And here it appears, at the opening of this seal, that a very great

change and transition of things taketh place. I understand the earthquake in this place, to mean the rise of Constantine the Great; and now the prayers of those souls which John saw under the altar, begin to be answered in part. And this is the little season they were to rest, which was about the space of 241 years; which time the Roman emperors persecuted the church almost without intermission. But now their time is come, their end is near, when the Lord will thresh these great mountains with a threshing instrument, and make them small as dust. For the Lord made choice of this man (Constantine), and converted him unto the Christian faith, and set him at the head of an army, and supported him and his army, to the pulling down and rooting out all those Pagan emperors that fought against him.

“And the sun became black as sackcloth of hair.” By the sun here I understand the whole Pagan worship, which was nothing else than the worshipping of devils, for the devil will always ape Christ; and, as Jesus Christ is the Sun of Righteousness in and to the Christians, so the devil pretended to be the Sun of Righteousness to the Pagans, and they believed him to be so. But when Constantine and his army conquered the Pagan em-

perors, and himself ascended to the glory of the kingdom, and the preaching of the gospel had free course and spread over the whole empire, then this sun became black as sackcloth of hair; no man gave attendance at his altars; and by this the whole Pagan state of the Roman empire was abolished, and the Christian state thereof erected by Constantine, and the devil dethroned for a time. But it was not long; for he soon began to play another game, which will be spoken unto afterwards.

“And the moon became as blood.” By the moon here, in this text, I understand to be meant the whole Pagan temples and places of worship, in which their idols and oracles stood, from whence they received their responses or answers, which were given by their priests and priestesses, influenced by the devil, their sun. Now what is meant by becoming as blood? Before these temples and idols were destroyed and abolished, there behoved to be very much bloodshed, and even in these very temples. I make no doubt but there were great numbers fled into them for safety, and so perished by the very horns of their altars.

13 *And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.*

What is meant by stars here, I understand

to be the Pagan priests. And the word *heaven* in this verse, signifies the great splendour and affluence in which these priests lived, by the spoils of the poor ignorant people, whom they cheated out of their worldly goods in this life, and out of the good of their souls for the life to come. Now when the gospel became the the common religion in the whole empire, we may form a notion how these stars or priests fell unto the earth: Their temples were deserted, their revenues taken from them, and, worst of all, themselves put to death.

We are to observe here, by the last clause of this verse, "when she is shaken of a mighty wind," that this points out unto us that there were none of these stars left in that heaven in which they lived before, which is described above; for a mighty wind leaves no fruit upon the tree, nay, it very often takes tree, and fruit, and all off together, which appears to me to have been the case here.

14 *And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.*

I understand by the first clause of this verse — heaven departing as a scroll when it was rolled together, to mean the whole state of Paganism in the Roman empire pulled up by the root, and the Christian religion planted and established on its ruins. And we see the

consequences that attended this great change and transition, in the latter clause of this verse, and unto the end of the chapter. What I understand by the *mountains*, is those emperors that, before this change took place, ruled the empire in its Pagan state; and by *islands*, I understand those viceroys that were set to rule their conquered provinces. These were all turned or moved out of those places in which they ruled and governed the whole empire, and held all in vassalage unto themselves.

15 *And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bond-man, and every free-man, hid themselves in the dens, and in the rocks of the mountains.*

As to this verse, it chiefly explains itself; only I shall point out what I understand by every bond-man and every free-man hiding themselves in the dens and rocks of the mountains. To understand betwixt bond and free, there were in those days a number of cities in the empire, which had a donation granted them from their emperors by free gift—that every man who was born in any of these cities became a free citizen of Rome, by his birthright, according to that donation or gift, given unto that city, whether they were Jews or Gentiles. And we find the apostle Paul

claims this freedom by being born in Tarsus. And we are well assured that he was a Jew. And there is no doubt but all they that were not born in these cities, were bondmen, except they purchased their freedom with a sum of money. Now, concerning all those mentioned in this verse, as hiding themselves in the dens and rocks of the mountains, I understand here dens and rocks to mean their fortifications and castles which they fled into, after they were defeated in the field; for we must understand here, that Constantine did not conquer the empire in one campaign; for it cost him 16 years war before he ascended to the glory of the kingdom.

16 *And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.*

This seems to be the language of these kings, and great men, and bond and free; unto their emperors and great generals, to flee into their strong holds and defended cities, for a covering and defence for them from Constantine and his conquering army, after they could stand no longer in the field before him; for they saw that he was determined upon their utter destruction, and that he would not come to any terms of accommodation, until he had

exterminated them from off the face of the earth.

17 For the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?

This is the last effort they could make in their own defence, either in the field, or in their fortified towns and strong holds. When they saw that they could stand no longer, they cry out "that the great day of his wrath is come;" that is, the finishing stroke—the day of decision—that they must all of them bow down their head to the slaughter, or to the mercy of the conqueror.

Now I know that this portion of Scripture, from the 12th verse to the end of this chapter, is often, if not always, explained with a reference to the last and general judgment, or at least emblematical of it; and how the wicked will be crying unto the mountains and rocks to fall on them, and hide them from him that sitteth on the throne. But let us take the apostle Peter's description of that last and general judgment, and see how they agree. 2 Peter iii. 10. 12. he says, "In the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the works that are therein shall be burnt up." Now where are the mountains and rocks to fall upon them, when the elements are all burnt up? For the earth is that element which

produces mountains and rocks; and when it is gone, I know not where they will find them.

I know that in the opening of this sixth seal, there is a great judgment denounced against the wicked; and I am pretty confident, that it was poured out on the Pagan state of the Roman empire, by the instrumentality of Constantine the Great, as it is described above. And our Saviour, Jesus Christ himself, gives a quite different description from this that we have here in these visions of John; for his description differs widely from either this or the judgment spoken of in the latter end of the 20th chapter of these visions. *See that chapter, and what is said upon it.*

C H A P. VII.

AND after these things, I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the winds should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.

The Divine begins this chapter in the same way and manner that he begins the fourth, when he had done writing his epistles unto the seven churches of Asia—"After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven." Here there was a new scene or discovery of things presented. Now the 4th, 5th, and 6th chapters, contain those things

which are recorded in this vision, which reaches unto the end of the 6th chapter. And here, in the beginning of this 7th chapter, he saith, "And after these things." Now *these things* are the things which were revealed to him in the foregoing vision. And here he begins a new series of visions, which reach unto the beginning of the 18th chapter. So he begins this great complication of visions, "I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth." Now what is to be understood by these four angels which stand upon the four corners of the earth? I understand here that these four angels represent the four great and grand divisions of the Roman empire, which was divided into four archbishoprics—one in Rome, one in Antioch, one in Alexandria, and one in Constantinople. And the power and jurisdiction of these four reaches unto the four corners of the Roman empire, and had all under their control concerning the church, only the emperor himself was still above them. In the first vision that John saw, there were seven angels belonging to the churches in Lesser Asia, but now, in this vision, the whole Roman empire is converted into four, by that Episcopalian form of government that then took place in the church, under Constantine the Great.

In the last clause of this verse, they are represented as holding the four winds of the

earth. I understand here, that these four angels were very zealous for the good of themselves and the church; and, no doubt, besought the emperor, that no persecution should take place against the church, but that she might be protected under the civil power. By the *earth* I understand the whole Roman empire, and by the *sea* the mass of people that then professed the Christian religion; by the *trees*, bishops and chief men in the church; and by the *winds*, all commotions, and differences, and schisms that might arise among them. These are the winds that were held at that time.

2. *And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God; and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea.*

The first clause of this verse gives an account of another angel which John saw, having the seal of the living God. I understand this angel to be Constantine himself, giving orders to these four archbishops to see and take good care of the church, and all its concerns that were committed unto them. And in the last clause of this verse, when it is said, "to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea," I think the meaning must be understood in this light—that it was not given unto these four angels or archbishops, which at that time presided over the church, to hurt the earth.

In the last clause of this verse, they are to be understood as holding the four winds.

and the sea ; but it appears unto me, that it was given unto the office which they held, by that form of government which was then established.

3 *Saying, hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. &c.*

Here, in this verse, a command is given unto these four angels or archbishops, not to hurt either church or state until the appointed time came. Now, on all that is said on these three verses, in applying these four angels unto the four archbishoprics of the Roman empire ; and that other angel which ascended from the east, having the seal of the living God, unto Constantine ; yet we are not to thrust out Jesus Christ, for he it is alone that walks in the midst of the golden candlesticks, and holds all these angels in his own hands ; so these are all but instruments in his hand, for perfecting the saints, and for the destruction of his enemies.

From this 3d verse, we have an account of the sealing of the servants of God in their foreheads, and the blessing, and glory, and thanksgiving unto God for their salvation ; and the great felicity, and happiness, and glory, that they shall enjoy when God himself shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. &c.

CHAP. VIII.

AND when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. &c.

The eighth chapter begins with the opening of the seventh seal. We must understand the silence here spoken of, to be the little rest which the church had after Constantine had subdued the whole Roman empire unto the Christian faith. For we see in the beginning of the seventh chapter, that the winds were not to blow on the earth till the servants of God were sealed, and prepared for the storm that was soon to overtake them. Now when the Pagan state was quite annihilated, and an end put to that horrid persecution which the church suffered under it, and all was quiet and serene, the Christians had golden days at that time; and, no doubt, thought that times and things would never change. But, alas! how we short-sighted mortals are deceived! God's word is sure and steadfast; but in the way of his providence, very changeable—at least to our understanding. His footsteps are in the deep, and his ways are in the great waters, and we cannot perceive his goings.

As to the precise duration of this silence, we cannot determine; but it appears not to have been of a long standing: As half an hour

is only mentioned, we may take it for 30 years or thereabout; for in the 2d verse, we see the seven angels have the seven trumpets given unto them.

3 *And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer, and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. &c.*

This angel here must be the same with him mentioned in chap. vi. 1. that went out on the white horse, which is Jesus Christ, and none else; for there are no prayers acceptable, neither of angels or men, unless they be perfumed with his incense. This we must allude to at all times, for it goeth up with the prayers of all saints; therefore at all times, while there are saints on the earth.

5 *And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire off the altar, and cast it into the earth; and there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings, and an earthquake.*

What a great change is here! Instead of incense to be offered up, nothing but fire, and it cast into the earth. A sore change indeed! This seems to be a signal for the seven angels to prepare themselves to sound.

7 *And the first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and*

they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of the trees was burnt up.

This seems to be a famine of some kind or other; but whether it be of the fruits of the earth or of the word, I shall not pretend to determine—but possibly of both. It appears to be mixed with persecution likewise; and I make no doubt but it had all these in it: For about that time the great ones of the clergy set up for bishops, and strove one with another for the precedence, and corrupted the pure gospel of Christ; and from thence arose nothing but error and schism in the church, amongst the dignified clergy. And the poor flock of Christ was lost for want of shepherds to feed them with the pure word of God, as it was left to them and us by the evangelists and apostles in the sacred canons.

8 *And the second angel sounded: and as it were a great mountain, burning with fire, was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood.*

As we said before of the first trumpet, as the hail and fire were cast upon the earth, so we see this cast upon the sea. This is all metaphorically spoken. By sea and earth, is meant the same thing. All these plagues are thrown into the church, as it was established in the Roman empire; for though the empire was changed from Pagan to the Christ-

ian, it was still the Roman empire ; and at this time all went under the name of Christian. But in the mean time, while they professed Christ by name, they denied him in works. They did not hold the truth as it is in Jesus, but left the true word of the gospel, and held councils, issuing creeds and confessions of human composition ; and then they divided into sects and parties, some following this creed, and some that, just as we are doing at this day : and therefore God sent these fore judgments upon them, that they might devour and destroy one another. But I shall not enlarge any farther.

10 And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of water. &c.

We see that every trumpet gives fresh proofs of the degeneracy growing greater and greater. This star that fell from heaven, I take to be Arius, who introduced that pestilent heresy into the bosom of the visible church, which remains in her even unto this day—and that is, denying the eternal Sonship of Jesus Christ. This star is called Wormwood, and it made the waters bitter, and many died of the waters, because they were made bitter ; that is, followed his pernicious doctrine, and so died from the true doctrine of the gospel of

Christ, as he is holden out to be the eternal Son of God, and equal with the Father in the the Scriptures of truth.

12 *And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars so as the third part of them was darkened; and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.*

We must understand the sun to be Jesus Christ. As the true knowledge of Christ was lost by the heresies and erroneous doctrines that the church was then infested with; so it is represented unto us by the natural sun being smitten in the third part thereof. As to the moon, we are to understand the true church, or gospel of Christ; and by the stars, we are to understand the apostles of Christ, or their disciples, ministers, or true members of Christ's mystical body,—all true believers in Christ, as the eternal Son of God, and equal with the Father, and already come in the flesh. For all they that deny this doctrine of the Father and Son, are declared to be Antichrist, 1 John iv. 3. And it is said, 2 Tim. iii. 13. "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." And 2 Theff. ii. 11, 12. "And for this cause, God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be

damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." Now, from the 4th to the 11th verse of this chapter, is contained a very clear prophecy of Antichrist. In the 4th verse it is shown what he would do—"exalt himself above all that is called God." I need not begin to prove that the Pope of Rome is meant by *that man of sin* and *the son of perdition*; for all true believers hold him to be the person, in a particular manner: but, in a general sense, all unbelievers are included; for all unbelievers share the same fate with him, as Christ himself declares in the gospel of Mark, chap. xvi. 16. "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned." But what I mean by this digression, is to give information who and what this *he* is; and what is meant by this *he* that now letteth, and will let until he be taken out of the way. By the word *let* or *letteth*, is meant hinder or hindereth, any thing that is in the way of another thing, so that that thing cannot advance or go in the way until that other thing be removed out of the way of it.

Now, to have a just understanding of the word *he*, we must consider the Roman monarchy in three distinct estates—first, Pagan; second, Christian; and thirdly, Antichristian, which is said to be the beast that was, and is not, and

yet is. Now, in the Pagan state, it was the beast that *then* was; in the Christian, it was not a beast; but, in the Antichristian, it returned to the beast again, but in another form. Now, as the Christian state could not enter or take place, till such time as the Lord removed the Pagan state out of the way by Constantine, who established the Christian, when he arrived to the glory of the kingdom; so neither could the Antichristian state take place, till such time as it pleased the Lord to remove the Christian state out of the way. So that the great Roman monarchy might pass through all its three estates or periods, as all the other monarchies had gone before it, which the Lord will destroy with the Spirit of his mouth, and the brightness of his coming. We see that the Antichristian state will meet with a fatal overthrow at last; for he must give place to the kingdom of Christ and his saints. This overthrow will be performed by the pouring out of the seven last vials on the Antichristian world.

I must now return from this digression, unto the fourth trumpet again, and show how the sun, moon, and stars were smitten. As I have already shown what the meaning of them is, I need not say any more on that head. They were smitten first by the clergy themselves, as I said before, striving for pre-emi-

nence of one another, minding worldly things more than the things of Christ. Secondly, by the Arian heresy, which overspread great part of the then Christian world, and other errors and persuasions that took place in those times; for the Christians devoured and killed one another in those times even as they do at this day: and their so doing made way for the barbarous nations to make inroads upon the western part of the empire, where they made great devastation, and at last overturned the whole of that part of the Christian state; so that they caused the last Cæsar to abdicate his throne, and so make way for the beast with seven heads and ten horns. For as long as the Christian emperor swayed the sceptre, there was no place for the beast. For though there were many great controversies among them, they were all still under the emperor's control, and he was their head as long as he wore the crown. But as soon as he abdicated the throne, which was in the 476th year of the Christian æra, the barbarous nations set up ten kingdoms in the west, and the bishop of Rome set up for himself; for as his head was then gone, he had full liberty to set up his superstitious idol practices among those ten barbarian kings, who were very ready to give their power unto him, for God had put it into their hearts at that time, until his will should be

fulfilled. So we must date the first rise of the bishop of Rome putting in for the Papal chair, and headship of the universal church, and exalting himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped, and over kings, kingdoms, and emperors; for he began his temporal headship with his ecclesiastical.

13 *And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth, by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels which are yet to sound.*

This verse gives us to understand, that all that had gone before was but little in comparison of what was to follow. It is by way of introduction to the next chapter, and in a manner introduces the Pope into his infernal chair.

CHAP. IX.

AND the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit.

This chapter begins with the sounding of the fifth trumpet. We understand by this star, the great man of Rome, the Pope, now fallen from the true church, which is called heaven. "Unto the earth," by this I understand all that live in error, and depart from the

true gospel of Christ. And we see a key given unto him, but not the key of heaven, which he pretends to have received from Peter, but the key of the bottomless pit, which he received from the dragon; for it is said that the dragon gave him his power.

2 And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.

By this smoke we are to understand all false doctrine, and all that is contrary to the truth as it is in Jesus, and all the superstitious rites and ceremonies in their idol worship.

We see here that all that went before was but little in comparison to this; for before it is said that only the third part were darkened, but here the whole sun, moon, and stars, and even the very air was darkened. So that I understand the meaning to be, that the whole gospel of Christ was in a manner annihilated, and instead thereof, the doctrine of devils introduced in its place, especially in all those countries and kingdoms which embraced the Pope's diabolical and damnable superstitions and de-ceivable errors, working in them that perish through unbelief of the truth, deceiving others, himself being deceived most of all.

3 And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.

I understand by the locusts, the whole rabble of the Popish clergy, from the highest Cardinal to the lowest Monk or bagging Friar. And we must not confine these locusts merely to the Pope of Rome and his clergy, but to Antichristians in all ages; for we are not to suppose that these locusts did not exist in the world before this time, for they did exist even in the apostles time; nay, even in our Saviour's time; for I find one that bore the badge and profession of Christ's disciple, and yet he was an Antichrist, and traiterously sold his Lord and Master, of whom Christ speaks, calling him the son of perdition; and not him only, but all them that follow his footsteps. The apostle Paul says, that the mystery of iniquity was working in his time. And the beloved disciple John informs us, that there were many Antichrists gone forth into the world in his time. And I apprehend there is even at this time many Antichrists in the world, that are not of the Pope of Rome's communion, but speak as much against it as any can do. Now to explain and define what Antichrist really is, we may draw the conclusion from the first that we read of in the word, and that is Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve. Now as he professed Christ, and yet denied him for his Saviour, he set himself perfectly in opposition to Christ, and denied him in all his perfections

as the eternal Son of God equal with the Father. And so doth every one that denies the doctrine of the Sonship of Christ; and not only so but all them that profess Christ as their Saviour, and are still adding their own works or righteousness, which is imperfect, to his most perfect and glorious righteousness. These are as much Antichrist as the Pope of Rome, in respect of their justification, while they remain in that state and opinion; "for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation!"

Now as to the power that was given these locusts, it is said, that "they had power as the scorpions of the earth have power." What is meant by the power of scorpions, I cannot positively say; but I think it refers to tyrants, who have power over mens bodies and consciences, and use that power to the ruin of both their soul and body. But whatever is meant by them, we see that in the 4th verse, they are commanded to hurt nothing, but only "those men that have not the seal of God in their forehead;" and they were not to kill them, but they should torment them five months. As to this number here it differs from all the numbers that are in this book, and in the prophecies of Daniel likewise; and I think it must be of another signification. Some

expositors have thought that this fallen star represents Mahomet, and the Saracens under him, who over-ran a great part of the Christian world for the space of one hundred and fifty years; but I rather think it alludes to the Pope of Rome, as I have said before. And I take these five months to be five years, and those five years multiplied by twelve, gives sixty months, these again multiplied by thirty, gives eighteen hundred years in the prophetic stile, taking months and days for years, which amounts to the latter end of the eighteenth century, from the first going forth of the gospel. Now it is plain and clear, that Antichrist did exist in the very beginning of the gospel, from what is said in the 3d verse. And it appears, when the eighteen hundred years are expired, that smoke and locusts will be sent to the place from whence they came, and that is the bottomless pit. And this calculation agreeth with the forty two months of the beast, and the twelve hundred and sixty years of the woman, the church, being in the wilderness. Taking the rise of the beast in the year 476 of the Christian æra, his time reaches to the year 1736; and 75 years added to the former makes 1811, which difference is very little in such a large computation. These seventy-five years are not to be found in this

book, but they are in Dan. xii. 12.; at the end of which the blessed state of the church begins. Here we may observe the difference between the two numbers. I think the 1800 years will put an end to the power of the beast, or Pope of Rome, and the 1811, the church will be relieved from her wilderness state.——

The rest of this chapter to the 13th verse, is a large description how these locusts tormented men, but it is not my province to describe all the ways that is prefigured out here, if any be curious however to know, they may consult Mr Henry upon the place, only I add in this place, that we must always be careful not to confound Antichrist in general, with his particular parts, which some have done who have gone this road before, unadvisedly thinking, that there was no Antichrist before the Pope of Rome arose, and usurped the headship over the church; indeed when he rose he brought Antichrist into a more systematical form than ever it was before. Now to apply the rise or beginning of Antichrist, to the rise of the Pope of Rome, is mere nonsense; for the scriptures prove that Antichrist existed long before the Pope of Rome had any being, at least in his Papistical state.

12 One woe is past; and, behold, there cometh two woes more hereafter.

This is the end of the fifth trumpet, but we

must observe when the end of it arrives; and that is not till the five months are expired. Now John saith here that one woe is past according to the vision. I do not think that this first woe will pass away before the other two woes take place, for the second woe begins to take place directly at the 13th verse, at the sounding of the sixth trumpet; so we cannot think that that first woe is past and gone at this time, or at any time betwixt that time and this, as long as we see that beast of Rome ruling over the church of Christ; and the kings of the earth supporting him and his clergy in their diabolical practices. Now as these locusts were commanded to hurt nothing but only those men which had not the seal of God in their foreheads. And as we see them still ruling over them, both in church and state, and tormenting them with false doctrine and oppression, in exacting from them what they earn by the sweat of their brow, to uphold their luxury, it cannot be said it is past. Now to understand what is meant by the word *past*—I consider it to mean, that it is only beginning when an act of counsel in the legislative body is carried by the majority, it passes into a law, and so we say such a law is past, in the mean time it only begins to operate and take place when it is promulgated by

the same power that put it into a law. Now the sounding of this fifth angel, and what was to follow, was decreed in the court of heaven, and promulgated by the angel in this vision to John, and by him unto us. So I think we need not expect this first woe spoken of here to have come to its end, as long as we see the beast sitting in his Papal throne. For it appears very clear unto me, that neither this woe nor any other of the woes in this book, will pass off the stage, until the pouring out of the seventh vial.

13 And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, 14 Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. 15 And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men.

Here in these verses we are to understand the Saracens under Mahomet, loosed and sent, by the providence of God, to chastise the eastern part of the Roman empire, for their rebellion against Christ and his gospel; and this was about the year 630; and they did chastise to purpose; for they over-ran a great part of the Christian world, and made great havock amongst the Christians with fire and sword,

putting all to death who would not embrace their false prophet.

We have another number here which doth not agree with the former in words as expressed in the text; but I am of opinion, although it doth not begin with the former, yet they will end much about the same time. For as the Grand Turk succeeded the Saracen, so he will continue until the pouring out of the sixth vial, if not until the seventh. In verse 16, we have the number of an exceeding great army, and in verses 17th, 18th, and 19th, we have all the implements of war and death for the destruction of men.

20 And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk.

We have here an account of the rest of the men that were not killed by these plagues, that they repented not of their idolatry in worshipping idols of gold, silver, wood, and stone, which can neither hear nor see; for all the judgments God sent upon them, they still cleaved to the Pope of Rome, and his abominable and damnable doctrine.

21 Neither repented they of their murders,

nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.

This verse informs us of their sins against the second table of the law, which they repented not of, more than the sins against the first which is described in the 20th verse.

C H A P. X.

AND I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire.

This angel is none other than Jesus Christ, as we see in the 2d verse, he had in his hand a little book open, and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot upon the earth, and he cried with a loud voice as when a lion roareth. Here we see all these characters agree with those which are given to him in chap. v. who was to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. In this chapter, the book was closed and sealed, and in chap. vi. six of these seals were opened, and one of them in the beginning of chap. viii. which is the last of them, which ushered in the seven angels with their trumpets, of which six of them was sounded in chap. viii. and ix. and the sound of these six trumpets brought in such a flood of errors into the Christian church, that it is raging unto this very day.

5 *And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven,* 6 *And sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer :* 7 *But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.*

I need not enter into a detail of these prophets, to whom God hath declared this great mystery, for most of them, if not all, hath spoken concerning it; but particularly Daniel, ch. xii. 7. makes full mention of time, times, and the dividing of time, which I understand to be the forty-two months of the beast, and the founding of this seventh trumpet will not take place until these forty-two months be finished, and that will be the space of 1260 years from the rise of the Pope of Rome. And, according to my calculation, it will begin to sound about the year of our Lord 1736, for I think about that time the forty-two months was out. Now, as the other six trumpets brought all the plagues and errors into the church, I am well persuaded, that this seventh trumpet, with the seven last angels and their vials, will purge the Christian church from that dross,

and take away all her tin; that is, purge her of all her idol and false worship. For I understand that all these seven last plagues will be poured out on the Antichristian beast during the sounding of this last trumpet; and when the last or seventh vial is poured out, then the mystery of God will be finished concerning the Antichristian state, for it will sweep it off the face of the earth.—What are we to understand by John taking the little book and eating it up, in the four last verses, and it being sweet in his mouth, but made his belly bitter? John no doubt saw in this vision the great glory of the church in the latter days, which was sweet and very agreeable unto him, but then he saw likewise the long time to its arrival, and the great and grievous persecutions that the church should suffer during the reign of that beast of Rome, and the many damnable doctrines that him and his master, the dragon, should invent; this proved very bitter unto him. And this book of visions will stand as a living monument and witness against many nations and kings, who have embraced and taken on the mark of the beast, and worship his image, and persecuted Jesus Christ and his true worshippers, and by so doing, manifested themselves to be the true disciples of Antichrist.

C H A P. XI.

AND there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein.

This measure must respect the whole fabric of the temple. But the meaning here cannot be the temple at Jerusalem, for both Jerusalem and its temple was destroyed fifty years, or there about, before John had these visions revealed unto him; therefore, the temple here must mean the church, under the Christian dispensation; that is, all true believers in Christ,—and himself the altar in the midst of his church, sanctifying her unto himself a pure church, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.

2 But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.

To understand what is meant by the court, it must be all them that lieth in wickedness; that is, all unbelievers, and they are given up to their own delusions to believe a lie, and they are to tread down the church of Christ 1260 years, which is the duration of the reign of the beast of Rome.

3 And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. 4 These are the two olive trees, and the candlesticks standing before the God of the whole earth.

There has been many various opinions concerning these witnesses. Some will have them to be John Huss, and Jerome of Prague; others will have them the Albigenes, and Waldenses; others again will have Luther, and Calvin established for them; and there is as many opinions concerning the time of their being slain. But in my opinion, they all flow from a mistake of the scope of the vision in general, and of this text in particular. The text saith, "these are the two olive trees that stand before the God of the whole earth." We must inquire what or who these olive trees are. And we find them called the two anointed ones, which stand before the God of the whole earth, by the prophet Zechariah, chap. iv. 14. I understand these two anointed ones to be Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit; for Jesus Christ is anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows, and grace is infused into his lips in full store, for the Spirit was given unto him without measure. "And no man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." And Jesus Christ is called

the true and faithful witness, chap. i. 5. and iii. 14. in this book of visions. And how often are we invited and commanded to hear what the Spirit saith, when John wrote his epistles to the seven churches in Asia? And is not the Spirit the dictator of the whole Scriptures of truth? And doth not this prove him to be the witness of God unto us? And doth not the Spirit bear witness with (or rather unto) our spirits, that we are the sons of God? Rom. viii. 16. To multiply any more texts of Scripture is needless to ascertain the proposition; for the tenor of the Scripture proves it to a demonstration. These two are the essential witnesses of the whole dispensations of God unto the sons of men. Mark it well, what John saith when he writeth unto the seven churches of Asia; for although he was the beloved disciple, and had so great revelations, which surely no man had greater, he doth not say, hear what I say to the churches, but hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.—As I have shewn who these two witnesses are, I mean to shew to whom they do prophesy. It is to be observed here, that the court is given to the Gentiles, and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months. Now, during the same space of time, the witnesses prophesy in sackcloth, and it must be unto them that worship in the temple of God,

and that must be to all true believers in Christ Jesus, for he is the true temple of God; "for the fulness of the Godhead dwelleth in him bodily."

5 *And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.* 6 *These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.*

These two verses give us a view of the power that these two witnesses had, which no mere man on earth ever had; and this power must be the indwelling power of the Godhead of Christ and his Holy Spirit. It may be urged, that Moses and Elias had such powers, but they did not work these mighty miracles of their own power; they were only instruments in the hand of Christ, which he chose and set apart for that purpose. We can have no doubt but God could have done those miracles without these men as well as with them; but as he works all things according to the counsel of his own will, so it seems to have been his will and pleasure to choose them for that purpose, that we might see and know that God works great and wonderful works by the instrumentality of men; and that he dwells with men on this

earth, and that he requires of us all the glory; and without doubt it is our bounden duty to give it to him alone unto whom all glory is due.

7 *And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.*

We must understand this testimony which they have finished, not to be in the time of their prophesying in sackcloth, but before the beast ascendeth out of the bottomless pit; for we see in chap. xiii. 7. of this book, that power was given him (that is the beast of Rome,) to make war with the saints, and to overcome them; “and power was given him, over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.” Now I understand by this text, that the testimony that those witnesses emitted, was from the first outgoing of the gospel until the Pope of Rome arose. Only let us look back unto the sounding of the first four trumpets, and there we shall see what grievous devastations and schisms, and errors, came in like a flood into the church—the Arian heresy, denying the Godhead of our Lord Jesus Christ—the Pelagians, denying original sin—the Nestorians and Eutians; and every one of them set forth their own creed. And then at the sounding of the fifth trumpet, his Holiness started out of

the bottomless pit, and set upon these two witnesses, and overcame them, and killed them. Now is the time of their prophecy in sackcloth, during the forty two months, and not of their testimony, as the most part of commentators understand it. We are not to understand the scriptures methodically as they stand before us; for we often find even in one verse to appearance a flat contradiction, such as where it is said, "I am a just God and a Saviour." Now how can we understand this text, considering that other text where God declareth that he "will by no means clear the guilty," if we have not recourse unto other texts that explain these; such as, where it is said that "God is just in justifying him that believeth in Jesus;" and such like texts.

8 *And their dead bodies shall be in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.*

Now we find that their bodies are dead. We may inquire by what means they became dead. We see in the text itself, that as soon as the beast ascendeth out of the bottomless pit, he maketh war against them and killeth them; and that is by denying the true doctrine of Jesus Christ, and his testimony which he gave unto his apostles, and was taught by them in the primitive times of the church. For as soon

as that beast, arose into power that was given him, he despoiled the holy scriptures, and trampled them under his feet for the space above mentioned. And besides this, he set upon the church with all the violence of war and persecution, and dispatched them, so that their voice should not be heard in that great city, during the time of his reign.

Now every one that knows any thing of the Roman Catholic religion, must know, that Jesus Christ and his testimony by his holy Spirit has lain dead in that great city Rome, ever since that star fell from heaven at the sounding of the fifth trumpet, who opened the bottomless pit and spread forth his locusts over the face of the earth, to torment men with their false and damnable doctrines; such as transubstantiation, and their unbloody sacrifice of the mass, and worshipping the departed spirits of men, and angels; giving the glory unto the creature which is only due unto God; and crucifying Jesus Christ the Lord of glory, and putting him unto open shame. Thus Christ is crucified in that great city, and lieth dead in its streets.—As to this great city being called spiritually Sodom and Egypt, I understand that her sins are equal and far exceedeth the sins of any of these places; for they never had the opportunity and privilege of Christ manifest

the primitive times of the church. Not as Rome

ed in the flesh, and his gospel dispensed among them, as Rome hath had.

9 And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.

I understand by the first clause in this verse, that it is not only the Pope of Rome and his ten horns, but it is all nations shall see and hear of the Christian name, which the Romans profess and yet blaspheme that worthy name by which they are called. Here a great stress is laid upon these three days and an half. The most of commentators makes them three years and an half, which they say will fall out about the end of their prophecy, and then the beast will set upon them, and kill them; but I have shown that they have been killed, at the beginning of their prophesying in sackcloth. So we must find out that these three days and an half, must amount to a longer time, than three years and an half. Now these three days and an half agrees directly with the time, times, and half time, spoken of in Daniel and in this book; for it is plain and clear, that the time, times, and half time, agrees with the space of time that the woman is in the wilderness; and that agrees with the prophesying of the witnesses in sackcloth, and the

forty two months of the holy city, being trodden under foot by the Gentiles. Now these three days and an half, prophetically taken, is three years and an half: and these contain just forty two months naturally; and these forty two months contain one thousand two hundred and three score days, prophetically taken, which directly agrees with the above-mentioned numbers.

“And they shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.” Here we see the Pope, and his rabble of clergy, and all his ten horns, will not allow, nor suffer their bodies to be buried. I understand by putting their dead bodies into graves—the grave is termed the land of darkness and forgetfulness. Now if he were to suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves, it would extinguish and exterminate their names off the face of the earth, as well as their doctrines; but this the Pope will not do, for it is by that name that he arrived unto all his power and glory on this earth, and by which he keeps it, and by which he will keep it. For he calleth himself Christ’s vicar on earth, and Peter’s successor, and the father of the holy mother church; now if once he loses that name, his power is gone, for it is by that name only, and alone, that he hath reigned over the kings, and kingdoms of the earth for so long a time.

10 And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoyce over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwell on the earth.

Now the Pope and his rabble of clergys, when he ascended to the Papal chair, and got the whole power of the church and state into his own hands, and his damnable doctrine established, no doubt but they would rejoyce, and triumph over Christ and his true church and worshippers therein. It is said that these two prophets tormented them that dwell on the earth. We may see and know how these two prophets tormented the great man of Rome, and his clergy, for altho' they retained the name of Christians, yet when any of Christ's servants preached his doctrine according to the truth of the scriptures, then they stormed, and raged, and persecuted them with fire and sword, even unto death.

11 And after three days and an half the spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them.

Now according to the vision, the three days and an half is expired and gone, the forty two months of the Gentiles is now done, and the time of their end is come. What I understand by the word Gentiles here, is the Antichristian state of Rome, which hath trod-

den under foot the holy city, these forty two months. And here in this 14th verse seems to be a great transition and a mighty change. I understand by the Spirit of God entering into them, that it will be a people enlightened by the great God of heaven and earth, to shake off the yoke of the Pope of Rome, and destroy him, and his damnable doctrine, off the face of the earth; "for they stood upon their feet," which shows that they were active, and lively, and hearty in the cause of him, who hath chosen them, and given them his spirit; as it is said, he shall come and his upright ones with him. This agrees with that stone which is spoken of by Daniel, "which was cut out of the mountain without hands, and smote the image on the feet, and grinded it to powder, so there was no place found for it; and the stone became a great mountain, filling the whole earth."

Here an objection may be raised against the proposition laid down concerning the witnesses; it may be said that those people that stand on their feet are them. I answer, that although these be men, they are not the witnesses mentioned in the text; for they are only instruments inspired by the Spirit from God to do his work. We are not to understand the spirit of life mentioned in this text, to mean life everlasting; I understand by the spirit of life

here to mean no more than a spirit of activity and valour, to perform that great work which they are called to do; and it will be a very strange work indeed; when those very people which shall be called heretics, atheists, deists, and all the abominable names, that the great men of this enlightened age, thinks proper to give them, I say it will be a great work, when these miscreants shall arise and trade down the holy mother church of Rome, and set his Holiness a packing to seek new lodgings. The last clause of this verse needs very little explanation, for it is naturally to be supposed, that great fear will fall on the Pope, and all the rabble of his clergy, and his adherents, when they see an open enemy approaching, and overthrowing all before them, like a mighty torrent of waters overflowing the hiding place, and sweeping away the refuge of lies, which hath covered them these thirteen hundred years—we find the bed too short and the covering too narrow, to cover them any longer.

12 *And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them.*

This verse seems to me to be very dark and intricate, but I must give my opinion upon it. I understand by the first clause, “and they heard a great voice from heaven.” The heaven

mentioned here cannot be the heaven above, but it is the city Rome, that heaven of the Pope and his adherents. Now the great voice, is the great noise that the Pope and his coalesced powers will make, and has made, against any innovations against church and state. Witness that diabolical league at Pilnitz and Coblenz, to root out the French from being a nation. Was not this a voice to them to prepare themselves to stand in their defence? The voice says more than to stand in their own defence; it says come up hither, that is, ascend up to Rome, that heaven of the Antichristian state, and pull down the whole fabrick of that tyrannical whore of Babylon, who hath made all nations drink of the wine of her fornication. And the last clause confirms the first, "and they ascended up to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies beheld them." And that is all they can do; for all the power the Pope and his minions can muster, cannot stop their career, they will only be like idle spectators, weeping and wailing for the downfall of that great city, and that heaven of the Antichristian state will be laid low in the dust.

13 *And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven*

thousand ; and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven.

This verse seems to me to include Mahomet along with the beast of Rome ; for the prophet seems to introduce a new subject, by saying the same hour, signifying something that did not belong to the former object which he had been treating of from the beginning of the chapter. And it appears to me, that their downfall will not be very far distant from one another.

In the 11th, 12th and 13th verses, I understand, as I said before, a great change of affairs on this earth relative to the church of Christ to take place. As it hath pleased the Lord to give up that part of the world, in which his gospel was preached by his apostles in purity and truth, for their neglecting of the truth of the gospel, turning away from the true doctrine of Jesus Christ, and worshipping idols, and panting after the dust of the earth, he hath delivered them up to their own hearts lust, and sent them strong delusions, and given them up to a reprobate mind, that they should believe a lie, and work all manner of wickedness with greediness. I need not say any more, but refer you to Rom. i. 20. to the end.

Now as God raised up Pharoah to be a plague unto the children of Israel, and to af-

afflict them four hundred years; so it has pleased God to raise the Pope of Rome, to afflict the Christian church for the space of one thousand two hundred, and sixty years, and to tread it down under his feet. But now that space of time is past and gone in the vision, and I hope very near gone in reality, according to the true import of the prophesy.

In these three foregoing verses, I think there is a text given of all the remaining part of this book to the end of chap. xix. As it is said in the prophets, that God will set to his hand the second time to redeem his church and people, it may well be applied to this text before us; for now it appears by the vision, that God is about to redeem his church from under the tyranny of Antichrist, and bring her out of the wilderness again, and raise her up to stand on her own feet in the beloved. For as God delivered her from under the tyranny and persecution of the Pagan state of Rome by Constantine, so now he will deliver her by the Spirit of life from God which he will give to them that he shall choose to be instruments in his hand for that purpose.—In this 13th verse, it is said, “In the same hour there was a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell.” This earthquake is at the same time that the Spirit of life from God entered into them; that is, to them he will

choofe. "The tenth part of the city fell," this refers to a tenth part of the city; now as the Pope is called a beast with ten horns, and these horns are ten kingdoms, it appears that one of these horns or kingdoms, shall fall off from the beast, which is the head from which all the ten horns grows. Now it appears that this tenth part falling off from him, causes a very great change and commotion in the Pope's dominions, so that it resembles a great earthquake, and makes the very heart and soul of his Holiness to quake and tremble; and also shakes all his religious rabble, to the very centre. It likewise appears that there is great wars contained in this verse, there being seven thousand slain. This given number I understand for an uncertain number, a great many thousands slain.

"And the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven." I understand this remnant to be some of the other of the beast's horns, which fall off from their head, and join this tenth part, and so give glory to God, in helping down with the beast, and that whore of Babylon, till they make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh and burn her with fire.

14 *The second woe is past: and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly.*

There is three woes mentioned in the lat-

ter end of the eighth chapter; and they must be very heavy judgments indeed, that there is such remarks put upon them. These woes must be understood according to the circumstances of the vision. I understand the first to fall upon these men, which have received the mark of the beast in their forehead or in their hand; and it falls on them at the sounding of the fifth trumpet, when the bottomless pit was opened and these locusts spread over the face of the earth, which I take to be the Pope's rabble of priests and clergy of all denominations, with their damnable doctrine, tormenting men both in soul and body; their souls with error and ceremonies, with their false worship; and their bodies undergoing penance in this life, and purgatory hereafter, and with poverty; for they grind the face of the poor, to uphold their bellies, and their rites and monasteries and mass worship. And as the Lord speaks by the mouth of his prophet Isaiah, "Woe unto you when I depart from you." And it appears that the Lord hath departed from them at this time, when the fifth angel sounded his trumpet; and that beast of Rome, and all the rabble of his popish clergy, hath been walking in idolatry, and all manner of tyranny and wickedness ever since, and will continue to the end of this great vision.—I understand this second woe to fall on the church

by the Saracens under Mahomet, who overran all the Greek church in Asia, and a great part both in Europe and Africa; and the persecutions that she suffered during the whole time of the forty two months of the beast's reign, which is too prolix for to insert here. As to the latter clause of this verse, it begins with a mark of observation, "and behold the third woe cometh quickly." Now it appears that the two first woes are near expiring, and this third woe commences in all its formidable effects. And I understand that it will light on the Antichristian beast of Rome and all his adherents, and it will be executed upon them in full proportion; for as he hath done, it shall be done to him, and double shall be rendered unto him.

Now as the Lord spake by his prophets unto his ancient church of Israel—"As I have thought to do evil unto you and repented not; even now I have thought to do good unto you, fear ye not." For as I said formerly God is about to redeem his church and people the second time; that is, to bring in the Jews into the bosom of the Christian church, with the fulness of the Gentiles, "that the whole earth may be covered with the glory of the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, as the waters cover the sea, and that all nations may see the salvation of our God."

15 *And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.*

As the seventh seal brought in the seven trumpets, so the seventh trumpet brings in the seven vials; and as the seventh seal comprehends all the trumpets, and not only the trumpets but the vials; for at the opening of the seventh seal, we have the whole prophecy laid open to us. For first we have an angel with a censor and much incense offering it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar, then we have the same angel filling his censor with fire from the altar, and casting it into the earth; and this angel cannot be any other than Jesus Christ, who is giving us to understand that he will preserve his church, and destroy his and her enemies with utter destruction.

It appears here that John saw, at the sounding of this seventh trumpet, the whole mystery of the vision completed, which he describes in the following chapters. The 16th, 17th and 18th verses contain a large doxology of praises and glory unto God, for taking to himself his great power and reigning, and judging the dead, and having rewarded his servants the prophets and saints, and that

he should destroy them that destroy the earth.

19 *And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple, the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.*

I understand by the opening of the temple, a full liberty to all people to read and use the scriptures with freedom, which hath been kept from them under the Pope's tyranny for the space of 1260 years; because the scripture is the ark of his testament, in which the whole will of God is revealed unto us (by which will we are saved); and it is kept in the scriptures just as the two tables of the law were kept in the ark, and laid up in the most holy place. The second clause of this verse comprehends what follows the opening of the temple; "and there was lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail." I understand, that when the scriptures are spread abroad through the kingdoms, over which the Pope triumphed and tyrannized, that there will be much light increased, and peoples understandings enlarged, and their eyes opened to see all the abominations that were practised upon them by the Pope and his underlings. Then there is no doubt but there will be great voices and thunderings heard, and wars and commotions, through his whole dominions.

And the whole will end with an earthquake and great hail, which will be the total ruin and downfall of the Papacy, &c.

CHAP. XII.

AND there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars.

It is agreed by all commentators, that this woman prefigures the church of Christ. But why is the church called a great wonder by this beloved disciple, who was so well acquainted with the power of Christ and his gospel, both when he tabernacled with them in the flesh, and after his ascension, when the Holy Ghost fell upon them on the day of Pentecost, with such power and glory that they spake in divers languages? for certainly John knew the true church was clothed with the Sun of righteousness long before this vision was given to him; and what need of all this great vision given to John to inform him of those things that he very well knew before? It appears that here was given something new and wonderful to John that he had never seen nor heard of before; so this great wonder that appeared to him is set forth in verses 2d and 5th, for in these verses is contained the first wonder that John saw; "And she being with child

cried travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered."

5 *And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.*

Now this man child that the woman brought forth is the great wonder that John saw in heaven; and who this man child is, is the great question to be answered. Some think he is Constantine the Great; but how can it be said that he did rule all nations with a rod of iron, when it is well known that he did not do so? for it is recorded of him in history, that he was one of the gentlest and mildest emperors that ever swayed the sceptre in the Roman empire. For my part I cannot apply this man child to Constantine; because his conquest is largely set forth and described at the opening of the sixth seal, in chap. vi. of this book of visions; therefore I can see no propriety in bringing him in again in this 12th chapter. Others think by the character given to this child, "that he is to rule all nations with a rod of iron; and being caught up unto God and to his throne;" that he is Jesus Christ. But it is well known that the church did not bring forth Christ, but that he brought forth the church; for the church "is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the

chief corner stone." It is said of Christ in the second Psalm, that he shall break them with a rod of iron; but in that Psalm it is plainly told us who it is that shall break them; he is plainly there called the Son of God by God himself; so I can see no connection between that text and this before us. Again it is said, chap. xix. 15. of this book, "that he shall smite the nations and rule them with a rod of iron." But in this text also, we are informed by the context preceding, who it is that is to smite the nations, and by what instruments he is to smite them with; it is with that sword that proceedeth out of his mouth, and that sword must be the word of God, for the word is the sword of the Spirit; and by this sword he will convert the nations unto the knowledge of the truth. And what I understand by ruling them with a rod of iron, must be the dragon, beast, and false prophet, and all them that take on their mark, which is to drink of the red wine of the wrath of God poured out without mixture, into the cup of his indignation. Now in all this chapter, this man child is never called the Son of God, nor yet the son of the woman that brought him forth, neither is the name of the son of man given unto him; so I conclude, that he is neither Constantine the Great, nor Jesus Christ.

Now it appears to me, that this man child

is no other than that monstrous beast mentioned in the beginning of chap. xiii. with the seven heads and ten horns. It remains now to show, how the church brought forth this man-child, and beast of Rome.—In the time of the Christian Cæsars or emperors, the great Patriarch or Archbishops, and their underlings, set up every one for themselves, which of them should or could be greatest and highest, and strove for the headship, and to lord it over one another, and not only by argument and writing, but by wars and persecuting one another, and rent the church to her very centre with schisms, and errors, and heresies; such as the Arian heresy, and many others; till at last the barbarous nations fell in amongst them, and drove the last Christian emperor from the imperial throne, and divided the western part of the empire amongst themselves, and set up ten kingdoms, then this man child was brought forth; for then and at that time, the Bishop of Rome put in for himself; for he is that little horn that rose amongst the ten spoken of by Daniel, chap. vii. But it will be said, if this man child be the Pope of Rome, how can it be said in the text that he was caught up unto God and to his throne? It is said Dan. xi. 21. “And in his estate shall stand up a vile person to whom they shall not give the honour of the kingdom; but he shall come

in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries." Now we must remember, that these ten horns or kingdoms, did not proceed from the Roman empire, but they proceeded from the northern nations; such as the Huns, Goths, Vandalls, and under other names. And they being uncivilized and ignorant people, that knew nothing of the truth of Christianity, there is no doubt but the Bishop of Rome played his own game with them, by his flattering speeches—giving himself out to be the great vicegerent of Christ on earth, pretending to have the keys of heaven and hell committed to him, and power to open and shut at his pleasure. And we see in chap. xvii. 17. that God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree to give their kingdoms unto the beast till the words of God be fulfilled; this being the way that he was caught up unto God, and to his throne; for these kings no doubt adored him as God; and when he had gained them over to give him their power, he soon took unto himself the name of God upon earth—"Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God; shewing himself that he is God," 2 Thess. ii. 4. Now we see this man child exalted to the throne which he had long strove for, and likewise how the church brought him forth; for he proceeded

out of the very bowels of the church, and holds it to this day; that is, lord and head of all nations. And if he hath not ruled them with a rod of iron, let the nations judge, especially those which have their eyes open to see. And no doubt but it was a great wonder to John to behold that the church should bring forth such a monster as that beast of Rome.

3 *And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads.* 4 *And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.*

These two verses contain the second wonder that John saw in this great vision. And no doubt it was a great wonder to him to see the devil and Satan standing ready to devour this man child, which was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. To understand this portion of scripture, in my opinion, is to take it in a spiritual sense; we are not to suppose that the dragon wanted to devour this child by a temporal death. Now as the dragon with his tail had drawn the third part of the stars of heaven, and cast them to the earth, what is meant by the stars of heaven must be applied unto those bishops and preachers formerly of the

true gospel, but now had fallen from it, as we see in chap. viii. when these stars fell from heaven at the sounding of the first four trumpets, and prepared the way for this man child, as we see him come next at the sounding of the fifth trumpet. Now the way which the dragon took to devour the man child was with seduction and lies—to misbelieve the word of truth, and believe error; and no doubt but he laid before this man child all the grandeur of this world in a very pompous way and manner; in the same way that he thought to devour Jesus Christ, when he had him upon the mount of temptation in the wilderness, when he showed him all the kingdoms of the world, and said, “All these things will I give unto thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.” And hath not the Pope worshipped the dragon ever since he fell from the true doctrine of the apostles and the Lamb? (if he hath not, he is very much belied and ill used by all our Protestant divines.) Now it is without a doubt that the dragon hath devoured this man child to all intents and purposes; for although he gave him his power and seat, and great authority in this world, yet his latter end shall be, that he shall perish for ever. Now let any man judge if he hath not devoured this man child most effectually; “for what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” thousands of

worlds are lighter than a feather when they are laid in the balance the one against the other. And now in devouring this man child, he hath not devoured him alone, but how many millions of souls hath he devoured along with him? And we see in the latter end of these visions, they, *viz.* the beast and false prophet, and all whomsoever are not written in the book of life, are cast into the lake of fire. And now I think this proves to a demonstration, that this man child is the very self and same with the beast spoken of in chap. xiii. of this book. In the prophecies of Isaiah, chap. lxvi. 7. we have a very clear prediction of this man child; but I shall transcribe from the 5th verse. "Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at his word: Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified: but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed. A voice of noise from the city, a voice from the temple, a voice of the Lord that rendereth recompence to his enemies. Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child." This whole chapter is a prophesy of the church in the latter days of the gospel; and likewise what the church should suffer from her brethren that cast them out, before these happy days should come. Now who is meant by your

brethren that cast you out? This points unto all Antichrists in all ages, but more particularly unto the church of Rome in the Antichristian state thereof; for in all ages, there hath been none that hath cast the true church of Christ more out, and persecuted them that trembled at his word more, or half so much, as the Bishop of Rome and his horns have done. "A voice of noise from the city." This voice from the city points out unto us, the noise and clamour of the civil powers, with their armies gathered together, for the defence of the holy man of Rome. The second voice from the temple, points out the rabble of the Popish clergy, when they see and feel the loss of their worldly wealth wrested from them, and all their idol worship trodden down to the ground, and their images and idols thrown to the moles and the bats. The third voice is "the voice of the Lord that rendereth recompence to his enemies." This voice of the Lord must precede the other two, "when he rises to shake terribly the earth;" (because nothing can be done on this earth without his permission), then the inhabitants thereof feel the smart of their wound, then the dragon, that old serpent, with all his followers, of the Antichristian tribes, fly to arms in defence of the beast, and rush into the battle to their own destruction. "Before she travailed she brought

forth, before her pains came she was delivered of a man child." I understand this text to mean, that before the church suffered her sore and long travail and pain by the persecution of the Papacy, she her own self brought forth that man child of the devil and Satan, to rule the nations with a rod of iron. And if he hath not ruled them since he rose with a rod of iron, let all true believers in Christ judge; for all them of a different opinion will judge quite contrary. "Before her pains came she was delivered of a man child." Travailing and pain in scripture language are synonymous terms; so the thing is twice repeated in this verse, that it might strike strong sentiments into the mind and heart of the reader, and ascertain the truth of the thing. In verse 8. of the chapter above cited, there is a clear distinction or difference put between the man child mentioned in the 7th verse, and the children of Zion in the 8th verse; for it is said here, "that as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children." This Zion here alludes unto Jesus Christ and his church—Christ the head, and the church his members, Psal. lxxxvii. 2. "God delighteth more in the gates of Zion, than in all the dwellings of Jacob."—Now as Jesus Christ underwent sore travail both in soul and body in the garden, and on the cross, and through all the course

of his life in this world, before he brought forth the Christian dispensation. So did not the church. For although the church was much persecuted both in the old dispensation and in this, by heathen nations, yet it cannot be said that she brought them forth; neither can it be said that these heathen nations was the church's brethren, while they remained in that state; but here we have false brethren to cast the church and Christ himself out. Now when the church was taken under the protection of the civil state, she then brought forth these false brethren, and this man child among the rest, who is become the head of them all, and cast out Jesus Christ, and thrust himself into his room, as the universal head of the church. And from the time that this man child arose, the church hath suffered both sore pain and travail with very hard labour. And I think this shows to a demonstration, that the church had neither pain nor travail, comparatively speaking, before she brought forth this man child, considering what she hath experienced since.

6 *And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.*

It is said they are to feed her: who are they that are to feed the woman all this space of

time? I understand this *they* to be the two witnesses spoken of in chap. xi. which is Jesus Christ and his Spirit, and they feed her with the Word of Truth, as we have it revealed in the gospel of Christ unto us by himself, his prophets, and apostles, which is the time of their prophesying in sackcloth.

What I understand by the woman flying into the wilderness is this: That the true church, all the time of the reign of the man child, or beast of Rome, is in a manner banished out of the world, for she is hid under the shadow of Christ's wings; and it is only here one and there one of which the true church consists; for even amongst us Protestants, one might ask amongst all the different sects, which is the true one? We may search and enquire with all the diligence we can, but it will be all in vain; for every one of them claims that prerogative, and surely they cannot all be the true church. In this case there is only one alternative, and that is, Search the Scriptures, and let every man try himself by that touchstone. If we believe that Moses and his law condemns to death,—Moses saith, “Curfed is every one that conforms not unto all the words of this Law, to do them,”—Christ saith, “Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and ye shall find rest unto your souls.” Now I think if a man believeth these two proposi-

tions, and fly unto Jesus Christ by faith, he may warrantably conclude that he is a member of Christ's mystical body; for he saveth all to the uttermost that come unto God by him.

7 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, 8 And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.

I understand by this war in heaven, betwixt Michael and the dragon and their angels, that it was, in an especial manner, from the time that the church was taken under the protection of the civil state by Constantine the Great, until the time that the last Christian emperor abdicated the throne, which was 150 years; and in that space of time the four trumpets were sounded, and in that time the old dragon, no doubt, thought to destroy and exterminate the whole Christian church off the face of the earth, by the many divisions, errors, and heresies that he brought in amongst them; that is, the ruling powers of the church. Whoever will read with attention from the 7th verse to the 13th of the 8th chapter of this book, will plainly see that this war was performed, in a particular manner, at the sounding of the first four trumpets.

We can have no doubt but there hath been

war between the Seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent, in general, ever since the fall of man; but more particularly at different times specified unto us in the scriptures, which might be shown at large from different texts of Scripture. Now we see in the 8th verse, that for all the mischief he hath done, yet he prevailed not. One would almost think that he had prevailed, when we consider the great devastations he hath made in the church, first and last. We can have no doubt but that he prevailed in a great measure; but he did not prevail in his chief design, which was to exterminate the true church of Christ, and Christ himself, off the face of this earth, wherein he failed and prevailed not; for we both see and know that Christ hath his own church of true believers on this earth; but indeed she is in the wilderness, and hath been ever since that man child arose to be the head of the Antichristian church.

9 *And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.*

We must consider here what is meant by *heaven*, in which this war commenced, and the *earth* into which the devil and Satan were cast. I understand by *heaven* here, in this

portion of Scripture, to mean the true church of Christ; and by the earth the Antichristian state of the man child or beast of Rome. Now he is cast out of the church in his old employment in seducing and deceiving the church, by transforming himself into an angel of light, and must appear in his natural colour, as he is the Prince of Darkness. But we must not think that this war terminates here, when the devil is cast out as an angel of light; for when or where hath he fought more against Christ and his church, than he hath done in his captain general, the beast of Rome: but he hath altered the plan of his attack; for he hath done it all by open force and persecution, as we see in the latter end of this chapter, from the 13th verse to the end.

10 *And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.*

Here we see the complaint the church makes against this false accuser. He first deceived them, and then accused them before God; and now they rejoice that he is cast down, and praise God and Jesus Christ, for his great salvation and strength.

11 *And they overcame him by the blood of the*

Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

Here we are informed how they overcame the old enemy: not by works of righteousness that they had done, but by faith in the blood of Jesus Christ, and by the word of their testimony; that is, by cleaving unto the truth as it is in Jesus, and confessing him before men, even in the face of all opposition, and loving not their lives unto the death; that is, became martyrs for the faith of Jesus, who loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

12 Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.

Here the church of God is bid to rejoice, and ye that dwell in them. And they have great reason to rejoice that they are taken under the protection of Jesus Christ, and hid under the shadow of his wings. But here is a woe denounced against the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea—that is, the Antichristian state; for the devil is come down to them, and covereth himself under the person of the Pope of Rome, and his ten horns; so that he may

vent his great wrath upon the sons of men, in destroying them both soul and body.

13 *And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child.*

Now we see here, that there is not one word of the dragon's persecuting the man child; but he persecuted the woman, that is, the church which brought him forth. Now, to enter into a description of all the ways and means that the dragon, in the person of the Pope, hath taken to persecute the woman-church, is quite above and beyond my reach or capacity; but we may point out two of the leading ways, which we have given us in the 15th and 17th verses following; in the 15th verse it appears to be by error, and in the 17th by open war.

14 *And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent, &c.*

In this verse, we are given to understand, that in the midst of all that flood of water that the dragon spued out of his mouth, which I understand to be error of all sorts, and the open violence of war and persecution, yet in all her distress she will be taken care of by Jesus Christ, her head and husband, and nou-

rished in her wilderness state, for the space of a thousand two hundred and three score days (years;) and when that time is expired, she will be brought forth from her wilderness state, as a bride adorned for her husband, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and will appear like an army with flying banners, unto the confusion of the dragon and all her enemies. For when that Antichristian is consumed unto the end, the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and it shall not pass unto another people, but they shall hold it and reign unto the end.

Now there may be a question started, which way the saints are to take the kingdom. Can we think that they will get it peaceably, without war and bloodshed? Will that beast and his supporters come and lay down their crowns and sceptres, and say to their subjects, Come and take them up; we have had our time of ruling over you with a rod of iron, now you may take them, and rule over us with your rod of judgment and righteousness? I believe these things will not happen nor come to pass.

Now to answer this question in the affirmative, we may see in Daniel ii. 44. "And in the days of these kings, shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed." I understand this kingdom was set up in its spiritual state under the Roman

power; but in the last clause of this verse, the meaning seemeth to be quite different; for it is said, "and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." Now Christ's kingdom, in a spiritual sense, neither breaks nor consumes any kingdom in this world; so we must understand the last clause of this verse in a temporal sense; for it must have room in this world, therefore it must break and consume all those kingdoms off the face of the earth, and make room for itself; and that must be by making war upon them, and wresting the power from them by open force of arms.

16 *And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.*

We still see that God uses means to preserve the woman church, and keeps her as the apple of his eye. Here we see that he makes the earth subservient to answer his purpose to help the woman in her great distress. We are to understand here, by the word *earth*, the ten horns or kingdoms of the earth, which gave their power to the beast, that they swallowed up his damnable doctrine, so that the true church of God and of his Christ might escape, by his own almighty power keeping her, from

taking on the mark of the beast, and the number of his name.

17 *And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.*

Here again we see that when the dragon, that old serpent, could not prevail over the woman, with his false and his damnable doctrine, and that flood of errors that he spued out of his mouth, yet still we see that he keepeth his old grudge, hatred, and malice at her; so what he could not do by subtlety and deception, he begins now to do by open force and violence—raises dreadful wars and persecutions against the church, and the remnant of her seed which keep the commandments of God, and had the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Now we see not one word of persecution by this old serpent against the man child, but of the woman, and the remnant of her seed. Now that one positive confirms the contrary negative. It appears clear, that this man child neither kept the commandments of God, nor had the testimony of Jesus Christ; for throughout all this chapter, there is a clear distinction always kept between the man child and the woman, and the remnant of her seed which keep the commandments of God, and had the testimony of Jesus Christ. So that this proves

to a demonstration, that this man child is no other than the Bishop of Rome, who fell from the true church at the sounding of the fifth trumpet, (chap. ix. 1.) and is represented in the beginning of the next chapter, as a monstrous beast, with seven heads and ten horns.

C H A P. XIII.

AND I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.

Here we have another representation of the Popes of Rome. We have him in chap. ix. 1. in the figure of a star falling from heaven; in chap. xi. 2. we have him represented as the Gentiles treading the holy city under foot, forty and two months; in chap. xii. 2, 5. we have him represented as a man child brought forth by the woman church, and caught up unto God and to his throne; on all these representations I have given my opinion. Now here we have him in the form of a monstrous beast, with seven heads and ten horns. Now the angel leadeth John in the vision, step by step, as in the representation given above. And now, in this chapter he brings him to his full elevation; for he is now enthroned in his Papal chair, and is now become the eighth king

of the seven headed beast. As to the land of the sea, and the sea itself, they metaphorically represent unto us wars and commotions that prevailed in the Roman empire, at that time when the Pope and his ten horns arose, occasioned by these ten horns making room for themselves, to set up their ten kingdoms out of the ruins of the Roman empire.

2 *And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion. And the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.*

Now it is worthy of remark, that this beast had all the properties of the other three monarchies that went off the stage before him. To begin with the lion, his property was pride. "And the king spake, and said, Is not this great Babylon which I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?" The second is Media and Persia, represented by a bear, which is a savage barbarous property, loving to devour much flesh. The third was Grecia, represented by a leopard, greedy of gain, and swift to conquer. Now when once the dragon found that this beast had all these bad qualifications in him, he soon "gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority." From hence we may learn, when this beast or

man child had got the dragon's power, and feat, and this great authority, whether he will rule the nations with a rod of iron or not.

3 And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed; and all the world wondered after the beast.

This deadly wound that this head received must have been when Constantine the Great translated the Roman empire from Pagan to the Christian faith; then the Pagan state received this deadly wound; so that it never hath, nor never will, appear on the stage in that form again: nevertheless, we see the deadly wound healed in this beast. To understand the way that this wound was healed, we must consider the beast that was, and is not, and yet is. Now when the empire was Pagan, it was a beast; but when it became Christian under Constantine, that Pagan head was wounded to death, then it was no more a beast, as long as the Christian emperors swayed the sceptre; but as soon as the last of them was deposed, or rather abdicated the throne, immediately the Pope arose among the ten horns, and so came up by degrees; and by his fair speeches and flatteries mounted up into this power that we see him arrived at in this text. Now when the Pope had got the whole ten kingdoms invested in himself,

then the beast that was not, became a beast again, but in another form. And so in this manner the deadly wound was healed, and all the world wondered after the beast. And, indeed, it was a great wonder to see the poor Bishop of Rome come to such an height, as to be head over the universal church of Christ, not only in this world, but also in heaven; for he hath got the keys of Peter, and he opens and shuts at his pleasure, if we believe him.

4 *And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast; and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him?*

Who is meant by they that worshipped the dragon? It must be those ten kings and their subjects, who gave their power to the beast; and it must have been about the time that the beast or Pope of Rome introduced image-worship into the bosom of the Antichristian church, which the great apostle of the Gentiles stigmatizes with the name of the doctrine of devils.

And "who is like unto the beast?" Now the Pope being exalted almost as high as his heart could wish, (for it is not easy to determine what height man's heart will arrive to in an exalted state) having these ten kings truckling in a manner under his feet, and paying all manner of subjection unto him, so that

it was a great honour to be suffered to kiss his Holiness's toe; (poor fools! when will they grow wise!) and it was no great wonder to see the whole world of those barbarous and ignorant people worshipping this great man of Rome, the beast; and cry out who is able to make war with him. Now when the beast had got these ten kings and their subjects joined with him, and animated as it were with one soul, they might well cry, Who is able to make war with him? for after these ten kings had conquered the west half of the Roman empire, and the Pope on their head, it became a very formidable and mighty monarchy; and as strong, if not the strongest, that ever was upon the face of the earth, (witness the crusades into the holy land, when most, if not all the ten horns vied with one another, which should be the greatest champion for his Holiness.) For they were not only united in their civil interest, but also in their spiritual; and they were bound in their conscience to worship the beast, and obey him in all things both spiritual and civil; and likewise to persecute unto death every one that did not adhere to his doctrine, and so it continues unto this day. Now from this 4th verse down to the 9th, there is a further description of this beast, containing his blasphemies against God, and his power to continue forty two months, and of

having power given him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them, and that all nations should serve and worship him, which are not written in the book of life, and of the Lamb who was slain from the foundation of the world.

9 *If any man have an ear, let him hear.*

Here is a caveat and caution thrown in to give warning unto all true believers, to be aware of taking on the mark of the beast or the number of his name.

10 *He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.*

Here is a clear prophecy of the end and downfall of this monster the beast of Rome; "for he that killeth with the sword; must be killed with the sword." Now how many thousands hath the Pope caused to be killed with the sword, for not adhering unto his blasphemous doctrine, and how many millions hath he led captive into the kingdom of Satan, that old serpent, who gave him his power; and therefore as he hath done, it shall be done unto him—good measure pressed down and running over shall be given unto him.

As to the second clause of this verse, "here is the patience and faith of the saints;" Christ:

himself tells us, that in this world we should have tribulation, but in him we should have peace, and that we should possess our souls in patience, standing fast in the faith of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Even in the midst of all these wars and commotions and blasphemies, we should remain steadfast and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; knowing this, that he that is for us, is stronger than all them that is against us, and that he will finish his work in his own good time.

II And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.

I know that many commentators holds this second beast to be the Pope in his ecclesiastical power; but I think by the whole scope of the vision, that the first beast in the beginning of the chapter seems to be him in his ecclesiastical capacity. And my reason for it is this—that I am very sure, that the first beast arose in his ecclesiastical power, long before he arrived at his civil authority; and certainly the angel was uniform in this vision, and did not show to John the beast first in the very reigning height of his power, which was from the eighth century unto the fifteenth, when his power began to abate, and then lead him (*viz.* John,) back again two or three hundred years, to show

him the beast in the beginning of his ecclesiastical power; for it is well known that the Bishop of Rome was up in his ecclesiastical authority some hundreds of years before he arrived at his civil power. Here is a remark worthy of observation, that from the beginning of this chapter, there is not one word to be found of what this first beast did, till you come to the eleventh verse, only a description of these things that he would do, when he received these powers that was promised him in the first part of this chapter: such as continuing forty two months, and making war with the saints, and prevailing against them, and having power over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations; and that all should obey him, that is not written in the Lamb's book of life.

And I think that the reason of their mistake is this; the first beast being represented as having seven heads and ten horns, they think that these ten horns or kings had given their power unto the first beast, and so far they are right; for the ten horns owned the Bishop of Rome in his ecclesiastical power over the church, from the very beginning of his and their rise, but not so as to the civil power; for he never arrived at the civil power until the eighth century, when Pepin king of France conquered the Exharat of Ravenna, and drove the Lombards out of Italy, and made a gift of that

country unto the Pope, under the title of Peter's patrimony, and there was about 324 years of the forty two months gone before this time. Now we come to the second beast, which is in truth but the same beast, but in another form; for he is now installed fully in his Papal chair with his triple crown—lord over heaven, earth, and hell. Here we have this meek and holy Lamb with his two horns, but behold he speaks like a dragon; by which we may understand, that we are not to receive the Pope and his doctrine to be what he pretends and gives himself out for. Now my opinion of this two horned beast is this, that these two horns is the two characters of his power, as he is the head of the Antichristian state, both in its spiritual and its temporal authority. For we see him in the beginning of this chapter with ten horns—these ten horns joining all together and giving their power unto this second beast, in their civil capacity, they become one horn, which is civil, or invested him with their kingly power, without which he could never exercise those powers that are promised to him in the former part of this chapter. And his rabble of clergy, in all their denominations, makes and constitutes the other horn ecclesiastical. But there is one thing to be observed in the first part of this chapter, and that is, although the Pope did not arrive at the height of his civil

power till the eighth century; yet both his horns began to grow at the same time, which was in the year 476, at the fall of the last Christian Cæsar, and they will continue unto the end of the vision, which is 1335 days (years,) bringing it down to the 1311 year of the Christian æra, and then, or about that time, the blessed state commences, according to the last chapter of Daniel and 12th verse.

12 And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

How are we to understand this first beast? There seems to be three beasts mentioned in this chapter. In the first verse we have a beast with seven heads and ten horns; in the third verse we have one of his heads wounded to death; in the eleventh verse another beast with two horns; and in this 12th verse we have a first beast whose deadly wound was healed. Now as I have demonstrated that the beast in the 1st verse and he in the 11th are the self and same, so the head that was wounded to death in the 3d verse, and this first beast are the same. I understand the first beast to mean the first state of the Roman empire, which was Pagan, that was wounded to death by Constantine the Great; and the beast in the 11th verse to be the Pope, who exercises all

the power of that first beast, so by him the deadly wound was healed; for now he is exalted to the heighth of his meredian (long wished for) glory; for now he hath got all those powers into his own hand that were promised him in the first part of this chapter; and these powers are very great,—and with great rigour he hath exercised it over both the souls and bodies of men. And as to the way and method how he exercised over them, we have a summary of it from this verse unto the end of the chapter.

13 *And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men.*

Now how this beast did these wonders I cannot take upon me to demonstrate, but we see by the whole scope of this vision that they were all false, and only deceived them that perish.

14 *And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.*

We see in the first clause of this verse, that he deceived them that dwelt on the earth, by these miracles that he had power to do. In the last clause, concerning the image of the

beast, we must consider the Pagan state of the Roman empire, which was full of all idolatry—worshipping of false gods; so the beast of the Antichristian Rome, by his infallible doctrine and decrees, sent forth into all quarters of his ten horns or kingdoms, and especially to the kings, his abominable doctrine of worshipping idols of gold and silver, brass, wood, and stone, which neither can hear nor see, and all his other idolatrous practices; and all under the cloak of Christianity, and for the glory of Christ, and the salvation of men's souls. Now this formed the complete image of the first beast that had received the wound with the sword and did live, only with this difference, that it was under another name. Now when his Holiness had got these ten horns to give him their civil power, to uphold him in all things that the dragon might put in his head or heart to demand of them, under the pain of being thrust into hell by the Pope's bare word, if they offended him in the least article.

15 *And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.*

Now the Pope and these ten kings or horns being joined together as the head and mem-

bers of the body, they became the perfect image of the first beast; and as the power is lodged in the head, so the whole power was lodged in the Pope, as head and supreme Pontiff over the whole Christian world, both in church and state. And he gave life and power to these horns, or kings, to persecute and kill every one that did not worship this image of the beast, which they had formed; and whosoever denied his headship and supremacy was sure of certain death on this earth, and everlasting punishment in the world to come; And the horrid massacres this image of the beast hath committed on Protestants, and all others that differed from him and them in judgment, since his commencement, it is wondrous to think of; for to give an account of them in this place is not my purpose, neither am I adequate for the task.

16 *And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:*

And what this mark is, we need not be very solicitous to know, whatever it is we see in the next verse, that all are excluded from buying or selling who have it not. I understand it to be this; that no man whatsoever state he be in, could live in the Pope's dominions unless he owned him to be king of kings, and lord of lords on this earth, and receive all his

decrees and doctrines that he chused to propagate, as infallible truths, and to reject all other doctrine which was any way contrary unto his decrees and commands.

18 Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is six hundred threescore and six.

Now concerning this number there hath been many conjectures, and disquisitions applied by very able and great commentators, some one way and some another; but I am only a babe and have not attained unto the tongue of the learned, nevertheless I may give my opinion, "for out of the mouth of babes and sucklings; thou hast ordained strength." And my opinion is this; when I multiply this given number 666 by 2, the product is just 1332, which agrees with the number given unto Daniel in chap. xii. 12. with only three years difference, which brings in that blessed state of the church, promised to take place in the later days. Now it is well known that this man, or man child which is spoken of in the xiith chapter, hath reigned on the head of the Antichristian state ever since he arose. Now what induces me to double this number is, that the 666 intimates unto us the time from the Pope's rise unto his height, which was in the 1142, or there about, when he was

prosecuting his first crusade against the Infidels, where he obtained great victory and spoil; and in the height of his persecution against the Waldenses, which lasted about 50 years. Now the other 666 shows unto us his decrease of power from the time before specified, unto his final dissolution, for he is to be consumed unto the end. Now it is known that in his second crusade, the Christians under the Pope's banner, were driven out of all their possessions with shame and disgrace, which they had acquired by their first expedition; and so since that time he hath been always on the decline and will continue unto the end of this great vision, which ends in the latter end of chap. xix. I think I need not say any more to strengthen my supposition, seeing what I have advanced agrees and quadrates so nearly with that number given in Daniel above mentioned.

This is the last number given in this book of visions, concerning the beast of Rome; and I think they all terminate and point out unto us the very self and same thing; and that is, the length and measure of time, that the Pope should reign on the head of the Antichristian state, from his rise unto his downfall and end; for at the time of the end, the vision will speak for itself.

C H A P. XIV.

AND I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads.

This Lamb mentioned in this verse must be Jesus Christ, for it cannot agree with any other; and now he maketh his appearance upon the holy mount, and puts in his claim for his kingdom, according to his Father's promise in the second Psalm—"Ask of me and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth, for thy possession." And this agrees with Daniel's vision, chap. vii. 13, 14, 27. so the time is come, according to the vision, that Christ is beginning to take to himself his great power, and preparing to bring down that mighty monarch of Rome, which hath ruled the nations with a rod of iron these forty two months, and persecuted Jesus Christ and his church these 1260 days, (years) and to consume him unto the end. The last clause of this verse gives us just the same number that was sealed with the seal of the living God in their forehead, that is given in chap. vii. of all the tribes of the children of Israel.

2 And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great

thunder : and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps :

I understand in this verse the effects that followed upon the sight of the Lamb standing on mount Sion. In the first clause it is represented as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder. Waters signify multitudes of people gathered together, and these generally make a mighty noise ; and thunder signifieth war and slaughter, and this teaches us that there will be great wars, and many shall fall down slain, before the harpers tune their harps unto that new song.

3 *And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders : and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.*

This verse informs us that those hundred forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth, were the harpers that harped and sung the new song ; for no man could learn that song but themselves.

4 *These are they which were not defiled with women ; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb.*

This verse shews unto us that these harpers were not defiled with women, for they were

virgins. What are we to understand by being not defiled with women, and being virgins? Now a virgin signifieth a pure and unspotted thing, in the common acceptation of the word, therefore we cannot suppose that these virgins were pure and unspotted from sin; for the latter clause of the verse forbids such a thought, because there they are said to be redeemed from among men; and they follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. I understand by this verse, that these were sinful men, and fallen creatures as all men are, before actual redemption took place—then they became virgins and undefiled; for the spouse of Christ, must be a chaste virgin, looking unto Christ with a single eye, not with a double eye; that is, with one eye unto Christ and another unto Moses; for that makes them unstable in all their ways; for Moses' law cannot justify them, and Christ will not; for all them that seek justification by the law are fallen from grace, and it is by grace, that they are made virgins and saved.

5 And in their mouth was found no guile; for they are without fault before the throne of God.

Now when the elect of God are covered with the robe of Christ's righteousness, and adorned with the garment of his salvation; they become pure and unspotted virgins, and they follow Christ whithersoever he goeth,

with a single eye of faith, looking unto Jesus, who is both the author and finisher of their faith; and they are then without fault before the throne of God.

6 *And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.*

We know that the gospel was preached before John had this vision, unto many nations; but here it would seem to be another advertisement, that the everlasting gospel, is to take an universal spread throughout all nations, and that will not take place, until the judgment of God be come, and poured out upon the Antichristian state of Rome, and her adherents, as we see in the seventh verse; "for the hour of his judgment is come;" and therefore all are commanded to worship him, who made heaven and earth, and the fountain of waters.

8 *And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.*

Here in this verse we are informed by the angel, that Babylon is fallen. And the reason given, which is the cause of her fall; because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. Now let us

consider what the wine of the wrath of her fornication is ; it is not only these ten horns, or kings, that gave their power unto the beast, but it is all nations ; now how can it be all nations ? for there be many nations, where the influence of that diabolical doctrine of Rome hath never come. But the case is this, when it pleased God to send his only and well beloved Son into this world, that we might live through him ; he was rejected and despised by sinful men, and not esteemed as the Saviour of the world ; and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil ; and the devil, that old serpent, followed hard on Christ, bruising his heel and sowing the seeds of error, and men believed the devil rather than God ; and so these errors grew until they came unto a head, under the Pope of Rome, which is called Babylon in this verse. Now it pleased the Lord, when the gospel of his Son was rejected, and the doctrine of devils embraced, that he withdrew his holy Spirit from men, and gave them over unto their own hearts lusts. Now the holy Spirit being withdrawn from men, so the gospel could not take that universal spread, which is so often recorded in the holy Scriptures, in the time of the reign of Antichrist, so all nations hath suffered and have been made to drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which

is here called the wrath of her fornication; so I conclude that it is upon the account of that monstrous wickedness of the Antichristian doctrine, and the Pope on its head, that all the heathen nations hath been left to lie in darkness; now there is no evil so great that can befall men, as the withholding the holy Spirit from them, for they are in no better case than the devils themselves, who are reserved in chains of darkness until the judgment of the great day. And therefore it may well be said, that all nations hath drunk of the wine of her fornication.

9 *And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, if any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, 10 The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: 11 And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.*

These three verses needs little to be said upon them, for they best explain themselves; only I think they give a loud call unto every one that reads them, to beware, and to bethink

themselves what they are doing when they are giving any countenance, or striving to uphold that tyrannical and idolatrous beast of Rome; for they see their judgment plainly declared, which will be poured out upon them without mercy, and is a great warning unto every one to fly from the embraces of the great whore of Babylon, lest they be overtaken with her judgments.

12 Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.

Here is a caveat and caution given unto the saints, to patience and steadfastness in keeping the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus Christ, in the midst of all those judgments that will undoubtedly befall all those that have taken on the mark of the beast, either on their forehead or on their right hand.

13 And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.

There is in this verse very great encouragement unto the saints, to stand fast in the faith of Jesus; for he is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and no man can come to the Father but in and through him. I have seen in some authors, I think it was in Mr Newton on

the Prophecies, a very great deal said about the word *henceforth*: he alledges it did not take in them that died in the Lord before John had this vision; or not taking in all them at all times that die in the Lord. Now it is a manifest truth, that all them that die in the Lord are blessed with faithful Abraham; for Christ himself saith, "whosoever cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." But we must look at the beginning of this book, and we will see where John's commission carries him, and we find it carries him forwards and not backwards; for in the very first verse of this book, it is said that God gave unto him (that is, Jesus Christ) to show unto his servants things that must shortly come to pass, and not things that were already past; for we are to consider this is a prophecy of things to come, and not a history of things that are past and gone: so, as to the word *henceforth*, it respects things to come as well as the rest of this whole prophecy.

"Yea, saith the Spirit." We must understand the Spirit here to be the whole Word of God, dictated by the Spirit of Truth; for the Spirit speaketh none but by or in the Word; he works his own operations, and his influence in the hearts of men to believe the Word of God; but otherwise he speaks none that they may rest from their labours, and

their works do follow them. We see here that those who have put on the righteousness of Jesus Christ, by faith in him, that their works do follow them, as a testimony of their faith, and no otherwise; for it is plain and clear, that we must have something to go into heaven before us, to introduce and make us accepted before ever we come there—and sure that can never be our own works. But thanks be unto God, that Jesus Christ hath entered into that within the vail, by his own blood, and hath obtained eternal redemption for us.

14 And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of Man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. 15 And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. 16 And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped.

In these three verses, we have a very striking and remarkable judgment ushered in with a mark of observation, (*I looked, and, behold*) in the figure or notion of a harvest. I understand by the earth here to be meant the world that lieth in wickedness, in general; but more particularly, the beast of Rome, and the Antichristian state thereof; for it appears to me,

that most, if not all these visions in this book, are so connected and interwoven together, and holden out in so many different similitudes, that all those grievous judgments will fall upon the head and tail, root and branch, of that Antichristian state at the latter end of his reign. We see in the 14th verse, one represented like the Son of Man: who can this be but that Lamb that stands on Mount Zion, in the first verse; there he hath an hundred and forty-four thousand, having his Father's name written on their forehead; here he sits on a white cloud. Now we all know that white raiment is the covering of the saints, so we may well suppose that this white cloud is another similitude of the hundred and forty-four thousand. But then we see him armed with a sharp sickle. Now, as reapers use sickles in reaping the harvest, so, according to the similitude, he is armed with this instrument, for his harvest work, which will be a grievous work upon the earth; when he shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, with flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Some commentators think that this first harvest is not a judgment; but that it represents Christ come to gather his own wheat from amongst the vines or tares of the earth.

But I do not remember any text of scripture informing us that Christ gathers his saints with such an unhappy instrument : But, indeed, the Lord saith in the Prophets, “ My word is a hammer that breaketh the rocks asunder ;” but that hammer is the law, that breaks the hard and stony hearts of finners, convincing them of sin, and the punishment due thereunto ; so drawing them by faith unto Christ, their great city of refuge. But howsoever it be, I rather understand it to be a very sore judgment poured out on the Antichristian state of Rome and her adherents. And I think that this first harvest, mentioned in these three verses, includes and comprehends in it the first five vials recorded in chap. xvi. for I do not think that this harvest is to be completed all at once—it will take a time ; for although it is said, that “ the time is come for thee to reap,” I understand it to mean, the time is come for thee to begin to reap ; as the harvest is not cut down all in one day, so neither will this be done all at once, it will take a time.

17 And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. 18 And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire ; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth ; for her

grapes are fully ripe. 19 And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great wine-press of the wrath of God.

Now I understand these three verses, and what is contained in them, to signify a much greater and forer judgment on the earth than the foregoing three did ; for I think that this judgment will purge the true church of all her dross, and take away all her tin. “ And I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning ; afterwards thou shalt be called the city of righteousness, the faithful city. Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness ; and the destruction of the transgressors and sinners shall be together, and they that forsake the Lord shall be consumed,” *Isaiah i. 25*, and downwards. I apprehend this last judgment respects and includes in it the two last vials that are to be poured out on the earth, which will root up the remainder of the Antichristian state, both root and branch, together with the Mahometan state in the East ; as we shall see when we come to these two vials.

20 And the wine-press was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the wine-press, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.

What we have contained in this verse de-

notes a most terrible slaughter. And where this great combat will be, I cannot take upon me to determine. Some commentators think it will be on that spot of ground which the Pope of Rome possessed as Peter's patrimony, which lieth betwixt the city Rome and the river Po, and is computed to be 200 miles, which agrees exactly with the number given in the text. Divide 1600 by 8, the amount will be 200. Now it is most certain that this judgment will be poured out on that very country and on its inhabitants, who have so long trampled Christ and his gospel under their feet; for those people are certainly meant by the grapes that are fully ripe, to be trodden in the wine-press of God's wrath. And I am of opinion that this wine-press will be trodden both at different times and in different places: but time will unfold the mystery when it takes place, and I think it is not very far off. And then the church will be redeemed from under these ruling and tyrannical powers of Popes and others, that have served themselves at the church's expence, crying, Church and state! and have made the church a stalking horse for them to ride upon, when they entered into what they call *just and necessary war*; when, in the mean time, it was only to satisfy their own ambition. Then the church was brought in as being in danger;—

then the hue and cry went through the nations, To arms! To arms! by the beat of drums, and by the heralds, and from that more amiable place, where the still sound of the gospel ought to be heard; there we hear the harsh sound of war—petitions put up that the Lord may instruct men to butcher and kill one another, expressly against the law of God. And these men call themselves the ambassadors of the meek and lowly Jesus, who gave his back to the smiter, and his cheek to them that plucked off the hair, and hid not his face from shame and spitting, and who came into this world, not to destroy men's lives, but to save them that had destroyed themselves.

C H A P. XV.

AND I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God.

No doubt but this sign that John saw was very marvellous unto him. As he had seen in the former part of the vision the rise and progress of that beast of Rome, and with what great power and authority he hath ruled over the nations of the earth for such a length of time, and fulfilled his forty-two months; and now when his time is out and gone, and his

power and work which was given him to finish are completed, he must remove from off the stage, and begone likewise. As the other three monarchies that were before him gave place unto him, so must he remove and give place unto him that cometh after. Now it may be asked, who is this *he* that cometh after the beast of Rome? This question is very clearly answered in the second verse.

2 And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God.

In my opinion, we are not to understand this verse altogether in a spiritual sense; for according to my understanding, there is a great deal of a temporal meaning in it. As to the first clause of this verse, "I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire;" this is a very strange similitude, but a very proper one. We cannot think but that there must be a very great difference betwixt that sea of glass mentioned in chap. iv. 6. for there it is said to be like unto chrystal; that signifieth no alloy or mixture in it. But here, in this text, it is mingled with fire. We all know that when revolutions take place in a nation, the revolutioners must stand on a precarious footing; for they have to contend with the whole

power of the nation; because the power is always lodged in the executive government, whatever it be, whether monarchical, aristocratical, or democratical. Therefore the revolutioners may well be said to stand on a sea of glass mingled with fire. And they had need to be vigilant and valiant, and cemented as one man; for they stand on very slippery ground, and fire and death surround them on all hands.

Now when a revolution takes place in one little nation, as it did in the year 1688 in our own nation; what must we think will take place when the beast of Rome and his ten horns will be revolutionised, and a new system of government will be raised up out of the ashes of the former; and this is the very thing that is pointed out here. The second clause shows us, that the thing is accomplished; and them that had gotten the victory over the beast and over his image, &c. stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. The sea of glass in this latter clause, seems to correspond with that in chap. iv. 6. for the fire appears to be extinguished, and now they tune their harps, they hang no more on the willow trees; the spread of the everlasting gospel will take place in all nations.

I wish that what is said above, be not construed, and thought by the reader, that I mean

to support and encourage revolutionary principles; by no means. My meaning is only to point out unto them the dangers that attend all such practices; for it must be very evident unto every observer, how dangerous a thing it is to rise in rebellion against lawful authority.

3 *And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. 4 Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.*

These two verses show us, that the church will be brought out of her wilderness state, when these harpers will sing the song of Moses, which signifies the law: that is, they will understand the difference between the law and the gospel. For as Moses is distinguished and his song, from the Lamb and his song, so the law must be distinguished from the gospel. The law is holy, just, and good in itself, but unto us it is the ministration of condemnation; and the reason of that is, because we cannot keep it. But the gospel is unto us the ministration of righteousness and peace. Now when these warriors that fight for the victory hath obtained it, then they sing chearfully un-

to God, and the Lamb, "saying, Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy Name, for thou only art holy; for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest." Now these brave heroes who have fought so gallantly for their liberty, and hath seen the judgments of God manifestly poured out on the Antichristian beast and all his adherents, their very hearts will swell and exult with joy, and glory in God their Saviour, by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; for it is by faith that we overcome the world. Now this is said in the present tense, according to the vision, but the work is not finished yet; but the time is fast approaching when this vision will have its full accomplishment.

5 *And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened, &c.*

In this verse we have a mark of observation, a behold! the testimony in heaven was opened. This signifies the prophetic testimony that was given by God, in the mouth of the prophets, and the apostles of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. And we may observe here, that the whole mystery of iniquity of that Antichristian state of Rome, is to be detected and laid open unto the eyes of the world; and not only so, but her final dissolution is now determined. And we see in the last three verses, the seven angels with their seven plagues, and

their seven vials, full of the wrath of God, fully prepared with those instruments of destruction, to waste and consume that monstrous beast of delusion and false doctrine even unto the end. As to the last verse of this chapter, I think it intimates unto us that the universal spread of the gospel will not take place, until the seven plagues of the seven angels be fulfilled. And then men will have free access into the temple, and there will be a very great spread of the true gospel through these nations where the beast had formerly triumphed in his wicked practices.

C H A P. XVI.

AND I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth.

In the latter end of the foregoing chapter, we see the seven angels fully prepared for their work. In this verse we have them receiving their commission to execute that great and dreadful work, in pouring out the vials of the wrath of God upon the sons of men; which I think should make every man tremble, and consider with himself, whether he hath taken on the beast, or his image, or his mark, either in his forehead, or in his right hand. But before I enter in upon the vials, I mean to give my opinion upon the times of the opening of the seals, and the sounding of the

trumpets. And as to the opening of the first six seals, they all opened in the time of the Pagan state of the Roman empire; for, according to the vision, the downfall of that state commenced at the opening of the sixth seal, by the conquest of Constantine the Great. Now the length of time of these six seals opening, was from the first preaching of the gospel unto the time of the wars of Constantine, and his victory over the Pagan emperors, which began in or about the 310, and lasted until the 326 year of the Christian æra. And as to the opening of the seventh seal, which brings in the trumpets, the opening of this seal, and the sounding of the first four trumpets, was in the Christian state of the Roman empire, from the rise of Constantine until the downfall of the last Christian Cæsar in the west, which was in the year 476, and this was the space of 150 years. As to the three last trumpets, which are generally called by commentators, the woe trumpets; and well they may be called by that appellation, for the first of them brought in, and established the Pope of Rome into his Papal throne; the second brought in Mahomet; and the third will have a quite contrary effect, for it will raze them both to the very foundation, and exterminate them from off the face of the earth. But to be a little more particular concerning these three last trumpets in this place: As to the

founding of the fifth trumpet, according to the scope of the vision, it ushers in the Pope into his infernal chair, as we see in chap. ix. 1. This being the first woe trumpet, and we see all the woes that this trumpet brings along with it, down to verse 12. where it is said, one woe is past. As I have given my opinion on the word *past*, in chap. ix. I need not resume it here again. So I now enter upon the last woe trumpet, which brings in the vials.

2 And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image.

Some commentators think that the time of the pouring out of this first vial was at the Reformation, or rise of Mr Luther; but I rather think it was a great deal later; for none of these last vials took place before the 42 months was out. There is no doubt but there was many vials of God's wrath poured out in the 42 month's reign of the beast; but as to these seven last plagues that are mentioned along with these seven vials, they were not poured out until the expiration of time, times, and half time. Now as I do not want to give assertions for argument, I refer you to Dan. xii. 7. "And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever, that it shall be for

a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished. Now I understand by this verse, that there is a time given unto this *be* to accomplish and to scatter the power of the holy people; and the space here given is time, times, and an half, which directly agrees with the 42 months of the beast; in which time he is to tread down the holy city,—and in treading down the holy city, he scatters the power of the holy people. Here we see no incroachment upon his time, for there is 42 months given unto him to tread down the holy city, and scatter the power of the holy people. Now we see the accomplishment of these things that is scattering the power of the holy people must take place within the compass of the time specified, which is 1260 years, and then all these things shall be finished; but to find out the time in which these things shall be finished, I refer to Dan. xii. 11, 12. there 30 years are added unto the former number, which makes 1290, and in ver. 12. there is 45 more added, which amounts to 1335 years, at the latter end of which the blessed state of these holy people shall commence.—Now if we turn over to Dan. vii. 25, 26. we will see this argument confirmed; and here is 75 years given for the finishing of these things, which is the time allotted for the sounding of the seventh trumpet, and the pouring out of the seven last

vials, full of the wrath of God, upon the anti-christian state, and to consume it unto the end.

According to my calculation, the 42 months of the beast was out in the year 1736, and then the 75 years commenced; and the first vial began at or about that time, when the houses of Austria and Bourbon waged war against one another, which no doubt was a noisome and grievous sore unto the holy man, and the rabble of his clergy, and to all them that worshipped the beast, to both see and feel the two first born, or great sons of the church, like children of one family, rising in arms against one another, and convulsing the whole state of his empire.

3 *And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea.*

As to this second vial being poured out on the sea, I suppose it may allude to that war which broke out about the year 1744, when the houses of Austria and Bourbon joined with Russia against Prussia, and the Protestants his allies, which raged all over Europe and America, and even from the West to the East Indies; but still the most of the blood that was shed in that war was in or about the Pope's dominions. And I think it hath a respect unto his ecclesiastical power likewise; for about that time the Jesuits were expelled by some of the Pope's horns, and the inquisitions much depressed, by

which the beast lost much of his power, both civil and ecclesiastical; for since that time his power and authority has become like the blood of a dead thing, wherein there is no life.

4 *And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood.*

I understand the pouring out of this third vial, to begin about the year 1774, when the disputes began between Britain and her American Colonies; for although Britain was not under the Pope's jurisdiction at that time, France and Spain was; and we all know that they took an active hand in that war, and no doubt but they were stirred up by the Pope, to wrest the British Colonies from their mother country; so that as they thought it would weaken Britain, if they could get all America rent from the British dominions, and exalt themselves: But as it pleases God always to work after the counsel of his own will, so it happens and generally falls out, that he works in a way unforeseen, and unthought of by men. For it is now plainly seen at this day, that when the Pope and his party took part with the Americans, they then laid the foundation for their own ruin and downfall.* And as it is said in the text, of this vial being poured out upon the rivers, and fountains of waters, now it is known that the great sea of waters, supplies all the rivers, and fountains of water in

the earth; just so here the great sea of Rome hath supplied all those places of the earth where his damnable doctrine hath obtained any footing; and it is certain that it had obtained, and overspread a great part of America, which is represented here, as only rivers and fountains of waters, compared with that great sea of Rome.

5 *And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus.*

Here we have the angel of the waters, giving praises unto the Lord, because he had judged thus. What can we understand by this angel of the waters, but the people of America, which had obtained their liberty.

6 *For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy.*

The first clause of this verse gives us the reason, for which the angel praises and glorifies God,—because they murdered and shed the blood of the saints, and prophets of the Lord; for which cause he is now giving them blood to drink, and this is the red wine of his indignation.

7 *And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments.*

Here we are informed, that God is just in

all his ways, and holy in all his works, and that he rules in the armies in heaven, and amongst the sons of the mighty, there is none to be compared unto him. As the prophets generally speak in the present tense, we are not to understand all this blood that God gave them to drink to be contained in this third vial, for as John saw in the vision, so he spoke, but we are to understand it in the future tense, as experience teaches us at this day, for we are to refer that blood that he gave them to drink, unto the latter vials, for it was not much blood that was shed of the Pope and his party in that war, comparatively speaking, besides what hath been shed since, in this present war, and what is yet to come, in the pouring out of the other vials.

8 *And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire.* 9 *And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which had power over these plagues; and they repented not to give him glory.*

This fourth vial, was begun to be poured out, about the beginning of the Revolution of France; for I understand that France is meant by the sun in the text; and it is very observable that while this vial is pouring out upon him, that there is power given unto him, to scorch the nations all around him with fire, as we see at this present time. And although

they be scorched with such great heat, as they are at this day, yet none of them are repenting to give God the glory, unto whom all glory is due, for sure the hand of Almighty God is in it, who hath raised up that one nation to baffle and confound all those nations that are risen up against it; for it plainly appears to have been raised up, as an instrument in the hand of Jesus Christ, to root up, and tread down the whole Antichristian state, and the Pope, that beast of Rome, who exalted himself, above all that is called God. I shall say no more on this vial, only refer you to 2 Thess. ii. 8,—13. where we have a very clear prophecy concerning the pouring out of the vials.

10 *And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain.*

Some commentators think that this darkness, spoken of in this text, respects the gospel of Christ; but how it is consistent with the scope of this great vision, that the darkness of the gospel will be greater at the decline of the papacy, than it was in the raging state of the beast, surpasses my judgment; for this darkness is said to be in his kingdom. Now hath not his kingdom been full of darkness, concerning the gospel of Christ, ever since its commencement. At the sounding of the fifth trumpet, when that star fell from heaven, and

darkened sun, moon, and stars, and the very air with his smoke and locusts, which he spread over the face of the earth; then and at that time, was the gospel of Christ darkened, and hath continued ever since, especially in the Pope's kingdom, for it is his kingdom that the text treats of; therefore we must understand this darkness to be of a quite different nature; for as the founding of the first six trumpets, ushered in the Pope into his infernal chair, and hath upholden and supported him all the time of his forty two months, so the founding of the seventh trumpet, and the pouring out of the vials, will have a quite contrary and different effect; "for they root him up, and tread him down, until he be consumed off the face of the earth." Therefore I understand this darkness, to be the revolting of these nations, or horns of his power, and throwing off his yoke, wherewith they have been holden all the time of the Pope's reign, and exposing his false doctrine, and idolatrous worship, unto the eyes of the world. And consequently this will withhold a great part of his temporal revenue from those kingdoms, who gave their power unto the beast, which makes him and his clergy gnaw their tongues for pain.

II And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds.

It is declared unto us in this verse, that the

Pope and his adherents, instead of humbling themselves before God, when he smiteth them with these plagues, they blaspheme his name, and repented not of their deeds; and this gives us to understand that they will not repent, for they will be hardened in their hearts against the truth, as Pharaoh was at the Red Sea, unto their own destruction.

12 *And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.*

By the waters I understand is meant people, multitudes, nations, and tongues; and the drying up of these waters, I understand to be these people and nations, so bound up by the pouring out of this vial, that they will not be able to exercise their former strength, to kill and murder men, which they received at the sounding of the sixth trumpet, when the four angels was loosed. And what is meant by the kings of the east,—there hath been many opinions about them, and as many conclusions laid down concerning them; but I have seen none that agrees with the scope of the vision; for these kings alludes directly to the four angels, who were bound on the great river Euphrates, before the sounding of the sixth trumpet, and then were loosed, and prepared to kill the third part of men; and there we see the great armies which was given unto them for that pur-

pose. Now their armies being dried up, they can kill men no more ; for what can be greater preparation for the downfall of an house, than to pull down its chief supports ; for pray, what is *kings* without subjects, and armies to uphold them. We are informed that Samson begged of the man who led him, to lean on the two principal pillars, which the house of Baal stood upon ; and pulling them down, the whole fabric came down with them. So the case is just the same here, for when these waters is dried up, it is the greatest preparative for these kings of the east, that can be, for their final overthrow.

13 *And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.*

What is meant by the dragon, I understand to be the Devil and Satan, together with the idolatrous worship of the church of Rome, agreeable to the old Pagan superstition of that empire in its Pagan state ; and by the beast, I understand the Pope. As for the false prophet, some of our commentators think he is Mahomet ; but I suppose him to be the Roman Cardinals, and Bishops, all included under that name. As unto these unclean spirits, being likened to frogs, the meaning may be this, frogs are amphibious creatures, which can live either in water or on the dry land ; so those

spirits can live either in church or state, and it is no matter of consequence to them, which of the two they serve, if they can obtain a good pension, and go always with a full belly.

14 For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

These spirits are called devils in this text; but devils cannot be seen by human eyes, but under some similitude or other; so the meaning here must be, that John saw men influenced with the spirits of devils, going forth into the kings of the earth, deceiving them by false doctrine and flatteries unto their own destruction: just the same as that spirit which promised to persuade Ahab that he may go up, and fall at Ramoth-gilead; so these are lying spirits in the mouths of men, as that spirit was in the mouth of Ahab's prophets. And as to them working miracles, we see how Pharaoh's magicians wrought miracles before him, and hardened his heart, unto his utter ruin and destruction at last, when he and all his host was drowned in the Red Sea; just so these spirits will work miracles before the kings of the earth, and harden their hearts, until they be drowned in the red sea of their own blood. Now these men that are influenced with these spirits, must be these Jesuitical priests, monks, and friars sent forth by the devil and the Pope,

and his dignified clergy, unto the kings of the earth, and their subjects. But what need we go unto Rome for to find out these spirits, when we can find them at home, even at our very doors? Men who call themselves the messengers of God, and ambassadors of Jesus Christ; and yet depart from the doctrine of the meek and lowly Jesus, (which is peace on earth, and good will to men,) and rise up and blow the trumpet of war through the nation, both by preaching, praying, and writing; for Christ never came into this world to destroy men's lives, but to save them; for it is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into this world to save sinners, of whom we are all chief.

15 *Behold, I come as a thief, blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.*

This verse is ushered in with a mark of observation—a behold. These words are thrown in here by way of caution, as though they did not belong to the thread of the discourse, either of that which went before, or that which followeth after. But they come in very seasonably as an advertisement unto the true church of Christ, of which all true believers are members. Who is this *I* spoke of in the first clause of this verse? this *I* must be Jesus Christ. “*I come as a thief.*” How is this to be understood? We are not to understand it as his

coming to judgment at the last day, for that does not agree with the scope of this vision; but we are to understand it of his coming to take vengeance on that Antichristian beast, who hath so long usurped his throne upon earth. This coming of his will be as a thief, because thieves generally come when people are off their watch; just so will Christ come in his providence on the Antichristian state, when they think least of it. "Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments." This garment, I understand to be the garment of salvation—clothed all over with the robe of Jesus Christ's righteousness; and this verse is thrown in here, to warn all the members of Christ's mystical body, to stand fast in the faith, and not to be moved away from the hope of the gospel, when they see that destruction come upon the beast, and false prophet, which is awaiting them, whom the Lord will destroy with the spirit of his mouth, and with the brightness of his coming.

16 *And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.*

Who is meant by this *he* that is spoken of in this verse? Some commentators of note think this *he* is these three unclean spirits spoken of in the 13th verse, and the *he* should have been rendered *they* gathered them together. But I rather chuse to agree with the text as it stands; and my reason for it is this:

I understand the *I* in the beginning of the 15th verse, and this *he* in the beginning of the 16th verse, to be one and the same person, which is Jesus Christ; and these spirits are only instruments in his hand to do that work of gathering them together, that is the Antichristian beast and all his adherents, with the kings of the earth, unto this battle of that great day of God Almighty, which is to take place in this Armageddon, or valley of destruction. And to confirm my opinion, as related above, it is said in 2 Thess. ii. 11. "and for this cause God shall send them strong delusions, that they should believe a lie." And pray, who is more likely to be employed by God in carrying those delusions, than the spirits of devils? surely none. We may remember, in the matter of Ahab, how the Lord sent forth a lying spirit into the mouths of all the prophets of Baal, and deceived Ahab; so the case is just similar here, for that beast and these kings must fall when the time comes.

17 *And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done.*

What are we to understand by *air*? I understand the word *air* in this text to mean the kingdom of the devil, for he is called the *Prince of the power of the air*, Eph. ii. 2. Now we must not think that this vial destroys

Satan altogether; for it only binds him up, so that he shall not deceive the nations any more for the space of a thousand years, as we have it recorded in chap. xx. 2, 3. But as for the beast and false prophet, this vial sweeps them, with their adherents, off the face of the earth, root and branch, as it is in chap. xix. 20. "And there came a great voice, saying, It is done." This voice came from the temple of heaven, and from the throne; and surely this voice will have its full accomplishment. Now we are to consider what things are done, and we may gather the meaning from the 13th, 14th, and 16th verses. In the 16th verse they are gathered together; in the 14th verse we are informed who they are that are gathered together, they are the kings of the earth and the whole world; in the 13th verse, by whom they are gathered together, it is by the three unclean spirits, as instruments for that purpose. And what is that purpose? It is this—that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness, according to the apostle Paul's definition, 2 Thess. ii. 12. But I must make a remark on this word *done*: This doth not allude to the last day, or eternal judgment; but it alludes to the latter end of the Antichristian state, and last period of the Roman empire; for the vials reach no farther than the end of chap. xix. As I said before

that the air is the kingdom of the devil, now the devil or dragon, which is the same thing, gave unto the beast his power, and seat, and great authority; so it appears that the beast hath received all his power from the devil. So we may conclude that the air is both their kingdoms; for the Pope claims universal supremacy over all, for he sits as God upon earth. Now, as the devil doth not appear bodily to work his hellish design against Christ and his true church, he covers himself in the person of the Pope, just as he did in the serpent when he deceived Eve; for it appears that the Lord hath given up the beast and his ten horns unto the power of the devil, to be led captive by him at his will, for the space of a thousand three hundred and thirty-five days (years.) And now, at the pouring out of this seventh vial, they are both taken off the face of the earth; for the beast and false prophet are both cast into the lake of fire burning with brimstone, and the devil, that old serpent which deceived them, is bound for the space of a thousand years; so that he can deceive the nations no more, until the thousand years be expired. But we must wait with patience until time bring those things to light; for that which is decreed shall be done.

18 *And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake;*

such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great.

I understand by the voices the great noise of boasting and bragging that those kings of the earth and their armies will make, when they are gathered together, with the Anti-christian beast on their head, viz. the generals of these armies what proclamations they will make. By thunders I understand the noise of war and bloodshed; for thunder in these visions always denotes war and slaughter, which generally taketh place when armies engage; and certainly these will all take place before this great combat hath an end, and that great earthquake commences. Now what I understand by this great earthquake is that great revolution which will take place when the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ. That is, when the world that lieth in wickedness is converted unto the Christian faith; that is, when Christ is received by faith as the true Son of God, and worshipped as such by all nations; for the Lord hath said, "I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." And indeed I apprehend that there never was such an earthquake since the world began, as this will be. The drowning of the old world with the flood was a great change and a great earthquake; and the deliverance

of Israel out of Egypt was another, with the drowning of Pharaoh and his army in the Red Sea; and the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah with fire from heaven, was another earthquake; and many other changes and earthquakes God hath wrought in this world, which are recorded unto us in the sacred Scriptures. But I am fully persuaded, that none of them all will compare with the earthquake which is spoken of in this text. And I ground my persuasion and belief on the text itself; for the text saith, "there was none like it since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great." And I ground it upon Daniel vii. 11, 13, 14. In the 11th verse it is said, "I beheld then till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed and given to the burning flame." This chapter consists of two parts: the first part, from the beginning to the end of the 14th verse, is visionary; and from the 14th verse unto the end, is the interpretations of these visions, which you may read and consider at leisure. Now most of all these changes that have taken place, in the providence of God, in this world, have been for the destruction of his enemies, and the saving of his own chosen ones; and they have all taken place at different times, and in diverse manners, and in different parts of the earth. But here we see, in the 26th verse of this chapter of Daniel, "the judgment shall sit, and they shall take

away his kingdom or dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. Now this judgment is executed by the pouring out of these seven last vials of God's wrath and indignation upon the beast of Rome, and the Antichristian state thereof. And this seventh and last vial will give the finishing stroke unto the whole Antichristian state, not only of the beast of Rome, but unto the whole world that lieth in wickedness. Now, the greatness of this earthquake seemeth to be, first, in destroying all the enemies of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, through the whole world; and, secondly, the advancement of his own church and people. Now, whatever punishments God hath inflicted on his enemies, and deliverances he hath given unto his own church and people, they have been only partial, some at one time, and some at another; but here is a total overthrow given to all his enemies at once, and then commences that blessed state of the gospel of Christ and his church upon earth, which is spoken of by Daniel, chap. xii. 12. "And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people and nations, and languages, should serve him. And the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." Now when the whole

is made up of parts, those parts make one complete body; then when all that body is complete, there is no part left out. And this is a complete fulfillment of God's promise unto Abraham, "In thy Seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."

19 *And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell; and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.*

What is to be understood by dividing the great city into three parts? I think this may allude to the three churches in Asia, mentioned in chap. iii. The first is to the angel of the church of Sardis, "I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, but art dead." This may refer or be applied to the beast of Rome; for that beast pretends that he hath a name that he liveth, but by the word of God, he is in reality dead. This may be said of the beast and all his adherents, who take part in his behalf, to defend him from that avenging sword of God's justice which will surely overtake him: This is the first and one part of the great city. The second is to the angel of the church of Philadelphia, "I know thy works. Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it." This may refer and be applied unto the French nation, and all those who take part with them in

pulling down the beast, and executing the vengeance of God upon that Antichristian state. And the third is unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans, "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot." This may refer and be applied to those nations which are neuter and stand aloof, and will not put to their hand to bring down Baal and his prophets. There are other three things which may be pointed out and applied unto the three parts of the great city; and these are, first, monarchical government, the second is aristocratical, and the third is democratical; these three seem striving at present which shall obtain the dominion. The second clause of this verse informs us, that the cities of the nations fell. We see, in the first clause, the great city is divided into three parts, before the cities of the nations fell. Now whatever may be the signification of these parts which the great city is divided into, we see, upon that division, that the cities of the nations begin to totter. I understand here, by the *great city*, to be meant Rome, that seat and receptacle and head of the whole Antichristian state; and by the *cities of the nations*, those horns or kingdoms which gave their power unto the beast, with whom he hath persecuted the saints, and trodden down the church of Christ these 1335 years or thereby. I say, when these horns divide likewise among

themselves, some for destroying the beast, and others for defending and espousing his cause, then we see the words of our Saviour Jesus Christ literally fulfilled; that is, "when a kingdom is divided against itself, it cannot stand;" and then the cities of the nations come down apace; for every one of them will bring down another. And we see the reason given for it in the latter clause of the verse, "And great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath."

20 *And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.*

I understand *islands* to mean the small and petty states, in general, which adhered to the beast. They fled away; they could not stand before the scorching heat of their enemies. And by the *mountains*, I understand the greater kings of the earth, who towered high above the rest of mankind, like the tall cedars on Lebanon, towering over the small shrubs. But none of all these are now to be found; they are all gone into the rocks, hiding themselves from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.

21 *And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God, because of the plague of the hail: for the plague thereof was exceeding great.*

I understand this great plague of the hail, in this text, to be the sum total of all the judgments which are contained in all the seven vials; for we are informed of all their beginning, but we have no account of their end, until we come to the pouring out of the seventh and last of them; then it is done. So we see the whole judgments of all the vials summed up in this verse, in the notion of a mighty hurricane of storm and hail, or as a devouring flood which sweeps away and destroys every thing before it; for we see, in the 20th verse, that the mountains and the islands fled away, and neither would nor could give any help; for great is the Lord God who judges her. And who shall be able to stand when he sendeth forth his judgments as devouring fire upon his enemies.

I shall conclude this chapter with a few notes out of the Psalms. In Psalm cx. 2. we have these words, "Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies." Now Christ hath ruled in the midst of his enemies ever since the beginning, but more particularly since the first going forth of the gospel. And he hath ruled in the midst of them in an invisible way, especially to them that cannot see him in the ways of his providence, but take things by chance and fortune; but to those who have their eyes opened by the Spirit of the Scriptures, they see him ruling his enemies often with a rod

of iron, and preserving his own church and people in the midst of all the persecution and malice that devils and wicked men can invent and put in execution against them. In the first verse of this psalm, it is said that his enemies shall be made his footstool; and in the 4th and 6th verses we are informed of the way and manner that they are made so. "The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath; he shall judge among the heathens; he shall fill the places with the dead bodies, he shall wound the head over many countries." Psalm ii. 9. "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings! be instructed, ye judges of the earth! serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling; kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way." Psalm xxix. 3, 4, 5. "The voice of the Lord is upon the waters; the God of glory thundereth; the Lord is upon many waters; the voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty; the voice of the Lord breaketh the cedars; yea, the Lord breaketh the cedars of Lebanon." Psalm lxxii. 8,—11. "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him, and his enemies shall lick the dust. The kings

of Tarshish and the Isles shall bring presents; the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts; yea, all kings shall fall down before him; all nations shall serve him." Verses. 18, 19.

"Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doth wondrous works. And blessed be his glorious name for ever; and let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen, and amen." These notes need no comment upon them; for they clearly expound themselves.

C H A P. XVII.

AND there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come up hither, I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters.

In this chapter the beast of Rome is represented as the great whore that sitteth upon many waters. This is a new name given unto this beast, that hath not occurred before in this book of visions.—We have mention made of a woman in chap. xii.; now we must draw a contrast between the woman and the whore. The woman was clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars. Here the woman church is clothed with all heavenly glory. By the *sun* I understand the righteousness of Jesus Christ; and by the *moon under her feet*, I understand the exter-

nal word of God ; for it is by the scriptures that the church is supported on this earth: and by the *crown of twelve stars*, I understand the gospel of Christ promulgated through the nations by the twelve apostles of the Lamb ; and with all these, and the influences of the Holy Spirit, the church is complete in Christ Jesus.

Some may suppose that the woman and the whore are the same, with this difference, that in this chapter she is degenerated from what she was in chap. xii. ; but that cannot be, for the true church cannot fall, for she is kept by the almighty power of God unto salvation. Indeed it is true, that many of those that have professed the name of Jesus have fallen, and that to a very low degree, as they are stigmatized with the name of a beast, and whore ; but we cannot believe that any of these were ever true believers in Jesus, they only took on the name for some worldly purpose or interest. But the true believer can never fall ; for God who begins the work of salvation by faith in Jesus Christ, is both able and willing to perfect it unto the end. It stands on record, that in Elijah's time, in the great degenerate state of the Jews in the reign of king Ahab, that God had reserved unto himself seven thousand which had not bowed the knee to Baal ; so that certainly those were the true church or woman clothed with the sun, so it must be at this day.

Now let us see with what gorgeous apparel this whore is decked in all her golden array ; indeed she cannot be described better nor plainer than what she is in the text. I mean from the 2d to the 7th verse of this chapter, we have her character given very splendidly, and her name written on her forehead ; and we see she is covered all over with earthly ornaments and grandeur, and full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication ; and above all, she is drunken with the blood of the saints and the martyrs of Jesus. So we must keep as great a difference between the woman clothed with the sun, and her that sits upon the scarlet coloured beast, as there is between light and darkness, for the one is heavenly and the other is earthly: But it may be said, why are they both represented in the wilderness ? I answer, although they be both in the wilderness, it is at different times of the vision ; and therefore the woman clothed with the sun, was obliged to flee into the wilderness, when this whore became mistress of the nations, and when power was given her and the beast that carrieth her, to rule them with a rod of iron, and persecute the saints, then she had a place prepared for her, and the wings of an eagle given unto her, that she might flee into her place, and be nourished there for the space of 1260 years, which is the same space of time that this whore and mother of harlots is to reign over

the nations. But according to the vision, her time is very near out, and then she must take her turn into the wilderness to receive her judgments; for that which is determined shall be done. And the woman that was in the wilderness shall return and sing as in the days of her youth, even as the children of Israel sang and rejoiced when they returned from their Babylonish captivity to their own land, their hearts were full of joy, and their mouth full of praise.

7 And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns.

In the latter end of the 6th verse, John wondered with great admiration, when he saw this woman arrayed in all her gorgeous apparel, and more so when he saw her drunken with the blood of the saints, and the martyrs of Jesus. And indeed we may not be surpris'd at his wondering when we consider, that the church of God, which he and his fellow apostles had planted among the nations with so much fatigue and industry, and triumphed over all opposition both of devils and men, by the Spirit of Christ, when he saw her given to be trodden and triumphed over by this whore. Now in this 7th verse, the angel acquaints John that he will tell him the mystery of the woman and the beast that carries her; and

indeed a great mystery it is that the angel begins to tell him off; so great is it, that few, if any, have been able to unriddle or find out the proper meaning of it in all its parts. But by the help that the Spirit gives in other scriptures, I shall unfold it as far as I am enlightened thereby. The apostle Paul makes mention of a great mystery; his words are—"And without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory," 1 Tim. iii. 16. Now as this mystery here is a mystery of godliness, so consequently the mystery of this woman and the beast that carried her, must be a mystery of iniquity, as the same apostle calls it, 2 Thess. ii. 7. Now as God was in Christ Jesus reconciling the world to himself, not imputing to men their trespasses, so the devil is in the person of the Pope, reconciling the world unto himself, and imputing unto men their trespasses; for he first deceives men, and then he accuses them, and sports with their folly. So we see that the Pope is just an incarnate devil; and it is he that sits in the Papal chair, clothed with human flesh; for when he first made his assault upon man, he clothed himself with the flesh or form of the serpent, but now he is more bold and assumes the sovereignty of the whole world in the person of the Pope.

8 The beast that thou sawest, was and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

Here in this verse the angel begins his explanation of the beast. We must observe here, that the beast that was, is the Pagan state of the Roman empire. This is the beast which we have represented unto us in Dan. vii. with iron teeth and brags nails, which stamped the whole earth to pieces. "And is not;" these words refer to the time of Constantine the Great, when he arose and subdued the Pagan emperors, then the whole empire became Christian, then the beast is not, during the space of the Christian emperors swaying the sceptre, which was 150 years. "And shall ascend out of the bottomless pit;" we are not to understand these words to mean hell or that place of punishment; for we hear of none that goeth there that ever ascends out of it; but we are to understand it to be a pit of errors which Antichrist spread over the face of the earth, when he got the keys of the bottomless pit committed to him, that is, when the Pope of Rome assumed the supreme head of the church, then he became the beast again. "That is not;" and to show the bottomlessness of that

pit of errors, I shall refer you unto chap. ix. 1,—12. of this book. That smoke which arose is a cloud of errors; so if any man can count the particles of smoke that ascends up into the air, when a great furnace is kindled of combustible stuff, so may he count that cloud of errors which that fallen star hath spued out on the earth by his locusts. “And go into perdition.” These words clearly demonstrate the final end of the beast of Rome and all his abominable errors, and locusts which are his rabble of clergy, they shall all go one road, and that is into perdition, which is explained to us in chap. xix. to be the lake that burns with fire and brimstone. “And they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world.” Here is a people mentioned that shall wonder. I understand these people to be those nations to whom the light of the gospel hath never yet shined; when these heathen nations hear, that the Christian religion is such a refined and glorious religion, and that it hath the holy law of God for its rule of life and manners. And yet when these nations seeth the people that profess the Christian religion, breaking through the law of nature and the law of God, in drenching their swords in their brethren’s blood, which professes the same religion with themselves; and not only so, but making laws of their own de-

vising, directly contrary to the law of God, which says, "Thou shalt not kill." Now when these nations that dwell on the earth sees and hears these abominable practices committed by those nations which call themselves Christian, I say, when they see and hear all this, and much more than I have mentioned, what can they think of the professors of the Christian religion, but that they are a horde of the grossest hypocrites that ever was upon the face of the earth. Now well may these people wonder when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is; that is, when they see the beast that reigned and ruled over the heathen nations of old, still alive, and reigning and ruling in the Antichristian. And I think the denunciation which our blessed Saviour pronounced against Capernaum, may be with great propriety applied unto Rome and her ten horns, which are exalted to heaven, but shall be thrust down to hell. I hope there is no Christian will blame me for what is said, for it is not the Christian religion that I blame, but it is the people who have abused it. As to the beast "that was, and is not, and yet is," I need not say much more about it; for it points out unto us the three grand periods, or different states of the Roman empire. The beast that was, points to the Pagan state; and is not, points to the Christian state; and yet is, points to the Antichristian state.

9 And here is the mind that hath wisdom; the seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sitteth.

I think it can require no great wisdom to find out, that the city of Rome, stands on seven hills, as all our expositors apply this text. If there were no other meaning in this text, than the city standing upon seven hills, I think that the angel would not have acquainted the Divine, that it would require a mind which had wisdom to find it out. Indeed my wisdom is but small in the matter, but I think the seven heads may be applied unto the seven angels that sounded the seven trumpets; for it is plain and clear, that the trumpets ushered in the Pope into his infernal chair, and hath upholden him in it, all the time of his forty two months; for the first four trumpets that sounded prepared the way. For the fifth, which brought in the Pope of Rome into his Papal throne; and these four trumpets were sounded in the time of the Christian state of the empire, when it was not a beast; but when that star fell from heaven at the sounding of the fifth trumpet, then the Pope arose and practised all those errors and heresies, which the four trumpets which went before him, brought into the church; and what these four left undone, as a scourge to the people for rejecting the true doctrine of Christ, the other three hath fully completed. So I take these seven

heads to be the seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth, of all kinds of errors and abominations and filthiness of her fornication, and upon these hath she sitten ever since the beast that carries her arose.

10 *And there are seven kings : five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come ; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space.*

Here the angel informs the prophet in this verse, the different forms of government which took place in the Roman empire, from its first rise through all the stages of it, except the last, which is the Antichristian, which the angel gives us in the next verse. Now at the time when the vision was given to John, five of these forms of government were fallen, and one is. The five which were fallen, are first, Kings ; second, Consuls ; third, Decimvirs ; fourth, Tribunes ; fifth, Dictators ; and the one that is, Emperors. There is a division in this text ; these six forms belonged and were exercised in the Pagan state of the empire, and all included under the notion of the beast that was. And the other that is not yet come, he is the seventh ; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. This other or seventh king, was Constantine the Great, who began the Christian period of the great Roman empire, or the second state thereof ; who, as an instrument in the hand of Christ, turned the whole empire from worshipping of idols to

worship the true God, by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, at least by profession. We are not to understand that it was Constantine alone, who must continue a short space, but him and all his successors of the Christian persuasion are included in this seventh king; and under this king's reign, the beast that was, is not; for it was translated from the Pagan darkness into the light of the gospel; then it ceased from being a beast, and continued so all the time of the Christian emperors, which was the space of 150 years; and this is but a short time compared with the Pagan state that went before it, and the Antichristian which followed after. Now some may allege that this seventh king, or form of government, includeth the six likewise; as the Pagan state was long ruled by emperors, as well as the Christian; but as concerning the church there must be a great difference, as great as light is from darkness; for the Pagan emperors persecuted the church as far as they had power given them, but the Christian emperors took the church into their protection, and defended her from persecution, until such time as the great heads of the church differed in their opinions, and persecuted one another; and that persecution hath remained in what is denominated the Christian church ever since. But whether that agrees with the doctrine of Jesus Christ and his apos-

cles in the New Testament, let any man judge; for my part I think it is quite contrary.

11 *And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eight, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition.*

Here we have a clear description of Antichrist, or that great whore of Babylon. We see here the beast that was, and is not become the eighth king, and is of the seven. Now there was six of these kings, or forms of government under the Pagan state of the Roman empire, and the Christian state was the seventh; so he who succeeded the seventh must be the eighth, whomsoever he is, and without all doubt he is the Pope of Rome; for this eighth king arose directly on the downfall of the last Christian emperor. In the west part of the empire, when that Revolution took place, and the empire was divided into ten kingdoms or horns, and then the little horn rose amongst them, and became king and head over them all; for all of them gave their power unto this eighth king. Now let us consider what a hermaphrodite of a creature he is, for he is a partaker of all the diabolical principles which were in the seven kings that went before him; for the text says, he is of the seven. And this word *seven* is not of the singular number, but it is of the plural; so it appears that he is a partaker of all those abominations which was practised by these seven kings or forms of government, that exist-

ed from the beginning of the Roman empire. And besides this, he hath all the bad qualifications, if they may be so called, which was in the three monarchies that was before the Roman; as we have it in chap. xiii. 2. "the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear; and his mouth as the mouth of a lion". And above all these, he hath the very spirit of the devil; for the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. And he had seven heads and ten horns, and he is like a lamb, but he speaks like a dragon. Now by the image here set before us, we see all the excrescence and filthiness of abominations which was in Nebuchadnezzar's image, descended down into its ten toes, which directly agrees with the ten horns that arose out of the western part of the Roman empire, of whom this eighth king is the head; and now we see this is the beast that was, and is not, and yet is, and goeth into perdition.

12 And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast.

To understand this text, we must apply to Daniel chap. vii. 8. where we see the ten horns arise out of the head of the fourth beast, which is the Roman empire; and amongst them there came up another little horn, before whom

three of the first horns were pluckt up by the roots. Now this little horn must be the beast of Rome, for we see here that he arose at the same time with the ten horns, which explains the latter clause of ver. 12. where it is said—“receive power as kings one hour with the beast.” The true meaning is, that they received power at one hour with the beast, or at one and the same time for they arose altogether, and every one of them claimed their own power and exercised it too; or else how could they have given their power unto the beast? As to the first clause of ver. 12. where it is said, the ten horns are ten kings, who have received no kingdom as yet; we must understand this in a comparative sense, for there can be no doubt but they received their kingdoms such as they are, at the time they arose; but the whole of their kingdoms joined together makes but one part of the great Roman empire. Now the petty kingdoms cannot be compared to those three kingdoms or monarchies, which went before the Roman, much less unto the Roman itself, of which they are but a part. For we read in Dan. ii. 37,—41. of four great worldly kingdoms, of whom Nebuchadnezzar was the first; and other three should arise after him, which makes but four in all, until the time came that the stone cut out of the mountain without hands, which smote the image on the feet and ground it to powder. Now

although they, that is the ten horns, received no such kingdom as those which went before them, as to extent and largeness, yet they received power at one hour, or at one and the same time, with the beast, to exercise dominion over their own subjects; and we see in Daniel what that power was, which is, "whom they would they killed, and whom they would they kept alive." Now some may think and say that there is none put to death in the Pope's dominions without the form of law, so may they say of these monarchies which went before; they had no doubt a form of law, for their will was their law, and their word was their executioner, and so it is with the Pope of Rome and his ten horns; and if any doubt the truth of this, they may read the history of the Bastile that was in France, and the Inquisition in Spain and Portugal, and other parts of his Holiness's dominions.

13 These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.

We are to consider in what sense we are to understand wherein they gave their power and strength unto the Pope of Rome. First they gave their power and strength to him in owning him the supreme head of the church, and this gave him an unlimited power over all ecclesiastical matters. The second is, they give their power and strength unto him as head and chief of worldly kings and kingdoms; so that

by them he was impowered to make kings, and dethrone them at his pleasure; and these two did constitute him to be the lamb with the two horns mentioned in chap. xiii. 11. nevertheless we are not to suppose that they agreed with him in all things, for there hath been many quarrels and disagreements amongst them and him since they arose; but there is one thing which they have all invariably agreed in with him, and that is, persecuting the true church of Jesus Christ, as we see in the next verse following.

14 *These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them; for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.*

As to the first clause of this verse there needs not much be said upon it, for the history of all times since the Pope of Rome and his ten horns arose, plainly demonstrates the truth, that the beast and these kings who gave their power to him, hath at all times made war against Jesus Christ and his church, when ever it was in their power, and what they could not accomplish by force of arms, they were sure to do by excommunication and cursing all down into the lowest hell, who would not conform unto the church of Rome and her infallible doctrine. Here we see in this verse a great transition of things, if we compare chap. xiii. and vii. we see there, that power was given unto

the beast, to make war with the saints and to overcome them; but here in this text before us, these are to make war with the Lamb and he is to overcome them; this shews that in the raging state of the beast with his ten horns, that power was given him to persecute the church during his forty two months, and it likewise shews that he was raised up by God to be a scourge unto the world for so long a time, for the rejecting, despising, and denying the only and well beloved Son of God, whom he sent into this world that we might live through him, and to redeem us from our sins with his own precious blood—"O my soul, exult and rejoice, that ever there were such good news sent and promulgated on this earth unto the sons of men!" By what is said before, we may observe the transition and change that taketh place in this text; for it plainly appears, that the Lord Jesus Christ hath taken unto himself his great power, and begins to reign over the nations, and will, to the astonishment of the whole earth bring them under his power, and make them subject to his will; for his arrows shall sharply pierce the hearts of his enemies, and his grace shall prevent his own chosen ones. And all Popes, Emperors, and Kings that sits high and lifted up above mankind, and all their corrupt ministers and attendants, both of church and state, that are living at their ease, and are fattening on the

blood and sweat of the poor, these shall bow before him, and lick the dust of his feet; "for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings;" and is fully able to deal with them, as of a thing of nought, for they are as nothing before him; yea and less than nothing.

15 *And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.*

This verse is a clear interpretation of the first verse of this chapter, and is a key to open the meaning of many such texts, which are related in this book of visions.

16 *And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.*

We see in this verse the total destruction and downfall of the Antichristian, and the last state and period of the great Roman empire. Now we must take a little notice how the angel speaks to the Divine, for he gives a grand description of the latter end of the beast, in very few words in this text, of this last and great destruction of the Antichristian state, by a proper degradation of one thing after another. In the first place the ten horns are mentioned, and they shall hate the whore. Now what follows hatred but the ruin of the thing hated, where he or they have it in their power to execute their hatred. We see in the next clause,

“and they shall make her desolate and naked.” In the 4th verse, we see how the woman was arrayed in purple, and scarlet colour, and so on; but now these very horns which decked and upheld her with her gold and precious stones and pearls, and gave unto her her golden cup, demand all these things back from her again, and takes them by force of arms, till she is made naked and bare and desolate, so that she hath not any thing left to cover her nakedness, and then she sitteth as a widow and knoweth the loss of children. The next clause is, and they shall eat her flesh. We are to understand this clause metaphorically. In my opinion, it signifieth that these horns will withhold what the Pope claimed as his due and proper right, for the upholding him and his clergy’s dignity as head of the church; but they will give no more of their substance to uphold him any longer, but exact back that which they have given, and this will be equivalent with eating her flesh; and the upshot of all, they shall burn her with fire; which will make the final end of the beast of Rome and the whole rabble of his clergy, and will root Antichrist off the face of the earth.

17 *For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.*

This verse gives us to understand that it wa

the will of God, that these ten kings should agree, and give their power unto the beast all the time of his forty two months reign, which plainly shews unto us, that God by his providence governs the whole world and all things in it, and that there is nothing comes by chance or fortune, but by the immediate order and will of God, who superintends all his creatures, and who ruleth in them, and over-ruleth all things both in heaven and earth.

18 *And the woman which thou sawest is that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth.*

This text points directly unto Rome; for at the time that this great vision was given to John, Rome was then in her glory, in her first stage, which was her Pagan state; and at that time she ruled over the nations of the earth, and she hath continued to do so ever since, sometimes less sometimes more.

C H A P. XVIII.

AND after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power, and the earth was lightened with his glory.

This angel is, without doubt, the same which is spoken of in the 14th verse of the foregoing chapter. "And the earth was lightened with his glory." We are not to understand this glorious light as it were the transient light of a meteor descending from

the heavens to the earth ; but we are to understand it as a permanent light, and an universal spread of the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ over the whole earth, according to the word of the Lord by Isaiah the prophet, chap. xi. 9. " They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain ; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." verse 10. " And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people ; to it shall the Gentiles seek, and his rest shall be glorious." This is the glory which shall lighten the whole earth. And in John viii. 12. " Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world. He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." And again, in 1 John i. 5. " This is the message we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all."

2 And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen ; and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hateful bird.

This is a proclamation given by this mighty angel, and issued with such a voice that it will extend from one end of the earth unto the other end thereof, and will reach from pole

to pole, that this great whore of Babylon mystical, is fallen, never, never more to arise.

3 *For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication; and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich, thro' the abundance of her delicacies.*

Here we see the reason given for her utter destruction—all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. I understand the first clause of this verse to be this, that all nations have suffered great wrath and sore affliction during the time of the reign of this beast of Rome; for if we look back to the opening of the seven seals, and consider the many millions that have lost their lives in open war, and the innumerable multitudes which have been persecuted unto the death for adhering unto the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ; and besides all this, the great afflictions those nations have suffered, whose kings gave their power to the beast, by the tyranny of those kings who ruled them with rods of iron, and all manner of oppression, even in their temporal things; for they are like the horse leech, crying, Give, give! and never full; and all to uphold their power and dignity. And how much more have they suffered in their spiritual things, who have been given over by God, to be imposed upon by the beast of Rome and his clergy, to believe a lie, and

worship the beast and his image. The second clause is, "And the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her." Now these kings which gave their power unto the beast are said to have committed fornication with her; because they not only became passive in obeying all his decrees, but strove which of them should be most active in obeying his dictations, and so became partakers of all the whoredoms which that beast and whore was guilty of; for whatever the beast commanded by his legates or otherways, they put it in practice, by the greatest cruelties that devils or men could invent, or human nature could endure. As to the third and last clause of this verse, I understand by merchants, the whole traffickers in that holy sea of mother church, and that is from the holy father Pope himself, down to the lowest begging friar or monk. And it is said, "they are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies." Now to understand what these delicacies are, we have a full catalogue in the 12th and 13th verses of this chapter. In the close of the whole catalogue, we have "slaves and souls of men." And the way they perform their trade in this merchandise, may be compared to children catching birds with chaff, for they hold out the golden bait, and pretend the Pope is God upon earth, and that all power in heaven and in earth is committed unto him, as he is Pe-

ter's successor, and Christ's vicegerent upon earth; and by thus bewitching the poor silly birds or people, which are parched with hunger, as it were hopping from one tree to another, and can find no resting place for their souls to repose themselves, are deluded and caught in the snare by these false signs and lying wonders that they do by the power of the devil, which is given unto him. But for a further description of this devil in the Pope and his clergy, I shall refer unto 2 Thess. ii. 9, — 13. where it is given by the Holy Ghost, who cannot err.

4 And I heard another voice from heaven; saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.

Here in this verse is a strong admonition given unto God's own people to withdraw themselves from the assembly of these men which had taken on the mark of the beast, and worshipped his image, lest they should be drawn aside by those great delusions, and be made partakers of her sins, and the consequence would be, that they must be made partakers of her plagues, along with all them that depart from the true doctrine of Jesus Christ, as it "was delivered to us by himself, and confirmed unto us by them that heard it," that is, by his apostles. Now this admonition teaches us to stand fast in the faith which was once deli.

vered unto the saints, and is still delivered unto us in the gospel; for we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end. Now what is this confidence that we are to hold fast? Surely it must be Jesus Christ laid hold on by faith, as the true Messiah, and the eternal Son of God, equal with him, in all his attributes. This I understand to be the great leading point of all true religion; for I see that most, if not all the errors that arose in the church in former times, flowed from unbelief of this great cardinal truth, and remains amongst us even at this day. "Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you forgiveness of sins; and by him all that believe are justified from all things from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses," Acts xiii. 38, 39. And if the law of Moses cannot justify us, which God gave from mount Sinai, how much less shall we be justified by the traditions of the Pope of Rome, or of any man whatsoever; for it is God that justifieth, through the blood of his own dear and well beloved Son, laid hold on by faith that is in him, and this is the just God and the Saviour. I need not say much more on this chapter, for every verse explains itself, by giving a proper attention in the reading; for it and the latter end of the next chapter is a full completion of the pouring out of

the seventh vial, only there is one thing which I shall remark, and it is, that there are three sorts of people which are mentioned here, who bewaileth the downfal of this great Babylon. And, first, they are the kings of the earth, which had committed fornication, and lived deliciously with her: The second are the merchants of the earth, for no man buyeth their merchandise any more: The third sort are sailors, and as many as trade by sea. Now all these shall stand afar off, “weeping and wailing for fear of her torment.” I understand by all those mentioned above, to be all them who had their finger in Peter’s boat, and caught fish to fill their own drag. By Peter here is meant the Pope of Rome.

20. Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.

I take this verse to be a complete answer to the saints prayer, in chap. vi. 10. And for the 21st verse, I understand it to refer unto ancient Babylon, and her sinking never more to rise, according to the prophecies of Jeremiah, chap. li. 63, 64. “And as a stone sinketh in water, so shall mystical Babylon sink for ever; for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.” So we see that this is the Lord’s doing, and it will appear wondrous in our eyes; for at the noise of the taking of Babylon, the earth was

moved, and the cry is heard among the nations. And this will take place when that great earthquake commences, which is spoken of at the pouring out of the seventh vial—"And then the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ."

The 22d and 23d verses gives us to understand the total ruin of all those craftsmen who wrought in Peter's ship, of whatsoever kind they were; for they all wrought in that great sea of Antichrist to fill the Pope's coffers and their own. Now all these things are departed from them for ever and ever, Amen.

24 *And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.*

We see here that all the blood of them which hath been slain for the word of God, and their adhering to the Seed of the woman, even from the blood of righteous Abel to this present time, when this shall take place that is recorded, Matth. xxiii. 35, 36. "That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar; verily I say unto you, all those things shall come upon this generation." Now I may inquire here, what or who this generation is, to whom our Saviour alludes; whether it was that generation of the Jews that was alive, and

contemporary with himself at that time, or all unbelievers both before and after the time that he tabernacled on this earth in the flesh. I apprehend this generation comprehends all unbelievers and rejectors and despisers of Jesus Christ and his gospel, wherever the light of the truth hath come, from first to last. Now what are those things which are to come upon this wicked generation? We will find them mentioned by Christ himself unto his disciples, Matth. xxiv. and in this book of visions; especially in the pouring out of the seven last vials and the other chapters connected with them.

C H A P. XIX.

AND after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power unto the Lord our God.

Now according unto the command given unto the heaven, and the holy apostles and prophets in the 20th verse of the foregoing chapter, to rejoice over her—I understand *her* to mean the whore spoken of in the beginning of chap. xvii. By the heaven which is given here in the singular number, I understand the whole mystical body of Christ, collectively in heaven and earth, are bid to rejoice over this great whore of Babylon, when the time comes that the Lord will visit her and a

venge the blood of his servants at her hand. Now according unto the command, we see from the beginning of this chapter unto the 7th verse, there is a great doxology of glory and praise unto the Lord our God; "because he hath taken unto himself his great power and reigneth over the nations, and for judging that great whore which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and having avenged the blood of his servants at her hand." Now here is an ample and satisfactory answer unto those souls which John saw under the altar, which were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held, which is mentioned in chap. vi. 9,—11. of this book, which may be read with attention, and compared with the beginning of this chapter, and here you will see all those things fulfilled, which is mentioned in chap. vi. 11.

From this 7th to the 10th verse, is thought by the most of commentators to give a description of the restoration of the Jews, and the incorporation of them into the true church of Jesus Christ, with the fulness of the Gentile nations. And indeed if that ingathering of the Jews be revealed unto John in this book of visions, I think this must be the place. For I do not see any other place which that ingathering can be so well applied as in this text. In verse 8. it is said, "And to her was granted, that she should be arrayed in fine linen

clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." Now I might ask what this fine linen is, or what is really meant by this fine linen? There might be great argumentations raised on this question, but I wave all arguments, nevertheless I shall give my own opinion; and that is, the fine linen white and clean, is neither more nor less than an emblem of that pure and unspotted righteousness of Jesus Christ imputed unto every believer, without the deeds of the law; "for by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin," Rom. iii. 20.

9 And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.

Now we have it recorded, Dan. xii. 12. "Blessed are they that waiteth and cometh to the thousand and three hundred and five and thirty days;" which prophetically taken is years. This seemeth to correspond with ver. 9.; for this text in Daniel informs us, that there will be a blessed time at the latter end of that given number, just so here in this 9th verse; they are blessed that are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And as the supper is the last meat of the day, so it appears that at this time will be the great and last ingathering of both Jews and Gentiles into the true

church of Jesus Christ, at the latter end of the Antichristian state, when all the seven last plagues of the vials is poured out on that beast of Rome.

And here I may insert a text which I think is very applicable to what I have in hand, it is Matth. xxvi. 29. "But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine until that day, when I shall drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." Now we see in the latter end of ver. 6. that the Lord God omnipotent reigneth; and in chap. xi. 15. of this book, we see that "the kingdoms of this world, is become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever." Now I think these texts prove this to be his Father's kingdom, and he will drink the fruit of the vine new with him at that time, when they are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. Now the vineyard of the Lord of Hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads, they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. I beg that I be not misunderstood here, as if I meant that Jesus Christ would come down personally to this earth, and drink or eat with his people, as he did with his disciples when he tabernacled here in the flesh; no, all that I

mean is this, that as the Lord Jesus Christ declared, that it was his meat and drink to do his heavenly Father's will, while he was on this earth, and finish that great work of man's redemption which his Father gave him to do; Now when that work was done very near 1800 years ago, "and when all rule and dominion and all things are put under his feet, by the power of God; and the outcasts of the Jews is gathered into the bosom of the true church, with the fulness of the Gentiles; then he will smell a sweet savour, then he shall see his seed, and the travail of his soul, and be satisfied; then he shall divide the spoil with the strong and rejoice in his portion. These texts, and many others of like import, I understand to be the meaning of drinking of the fruit of the vine, new in his Father's kingdom; and the full meaning and import of this marriage supper spoken of in this text.

10 *And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not; I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus, worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.*

As to this verse, I do not mean to say much upon it, for it is well known in the first commandment—"Thou shalt have no other God but me;" therefore we are to give no divine worship to any mere creature, but unto God himself; therefore John was wrong, but he

was rectified by the angel and set right, and by this text we see how the very best of men may err and go wrong.

11 *And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse: and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.*

Now from the beginning of this chapter, unto this verse, John hath a view of the great rejoicing of the saints at the overthrow of Antichrist. And in this verse unto the end of this chapter, is given unto him, a full display of the downfall of that great whore, who corrupted the earth with her fornication. Now in chap. xv. 8. of this book, we see that the "temple was filled with smoke, from the glory of God and from his power, and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled." Now the heaven being opened, "John saw and beheld a white horse." This must be the same horse, which the Divine saw at the opening of the first seal, in the beginning of chap. vi. "there he had a bow, and a crown was given unto him; and he went out conquering and to conquer." Now if we read the acts of the apostles, we may see how Jesus conquered his own chosen people, by the preaching of his gospel by the apostles, and the pouring out of the Holy Ghost; and then he conquered the whole Pagan state of the Roman empire, by the sword of Constan-

tine the great. In this 11th verse, and downward to the 17th, we have a large description of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and his army—"and that he should smite the nations with the sword, which goeth out of his mouth, and rule them with a rod of iron." I mean to make a remark here, betwixt this personage which is to rule them with a rod of iron, and who treadeth the wine press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God; and the man child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. Now let any man read this description from ver. 10th to 17th, and compare it with the man child, mentioned in chap. xii. and then judge if there be any likeness between the two. I am pretty sure that they must conclude, that they are not the same person. And this text confirms me in my opinion, which I have given of the man child, in chap. xii, and I am pretty sure, that he is that king, who presides over the locust, which is the angel of the bottomless pit; whose name in the Hebrew tongue, is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue, hath his name Apollyon, which signifies destroyer; and what numbers of mankind has he destroyed both soul and body since he arose, to be the eighth king of the Roman empire! This portion of scripture informs us, that great conqueror, doth make war in judgment and righteousness. Now some may think, as I believe many do, that there is given here a li-

berty for men to make war one against another, especially when one man or king, encroacheth upon another's right; then this is called a defensive war, and becomes just and necessary. But we must always hold a great difference betwixt this *he*, who doth judge and make war, and the kings of the earth; for all judgment both in heaven and earth is committed unto him, whose eyes is like a flame of fire; so that he seeth into the secret recesses of the heart, and he always judges with righteous judgment; and when he maketh war, it is always against that old serpent the devil and his adherents. Now can there be a more righteous thing, than that Christ should regain his own, whom the devil hath deluded and stolen from him, with signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness; for he hath opposed Christ from the beginning, but more so in the Pope of Rome, than in all the heathen and Pagan states that went before him. Therefore it appears unto me, that it is both just and righteous, and most necessary, that that Antichristian state be pulled down and consumed unto the end. "And O Lord let it be done, and hasten it in thy time—and thy kingdom come, and thy will be done; and may the glory of the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea."

17 *And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the*

fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God.

Here John saw an angel in the sun. What is meant by the sun? I understand here by the sun in this text, to be the same which is mentioned in chap. xvi. 8. which I take to be France. And his crying with a loud voice signifieth the great noise that the Revolution in that country made throughout the nations; and that mighty noise hath gathered the nations together to devour them. And we hear and see how the earth hath been soaked with the blood of the slain. And whether we understand by the fowls, those winged fowls that fly in the open firmament, or perhaps the great men of the earth, who fly as high above the rest of mankind as the fowls fly above the earth, it doth not matter much; for they have both been satiated with the flesh and blood of men of late years, and we have reason to fear greater destruction will yet take place; for from ver. 17—21. there is a close connection with this great supper of the great God; and we see nothing in it but blood and slaughter of both great and small. In this verse there is a proclamation unto all the fowls which fly in the midst of heaven, to gather themselves together unto this great supper, and in the next we see the great provision made for them.

18 *That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh*

of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great. 19 And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. 20 And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image: these both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.

Ver. 18th and 19th are so plain of themselves, that to say any thing on them would rather darken than throw any light upon them; but in ver. 20. something requires an explication, and that is, Who is meant by the false prophet, which is taken with the beast? Now some, if not the most of our commentators and expositors conclude, that this false prophet is Mahomet, and, in my opinion, have deceived many by their conclusions which they have laid down; for one may deceive many—when one follows another and pins their opinion to another's coat-tail, like a string of wild geese. Now it is said in this verse, that this false prophet wrought miracles before him, that is, before the beast with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast and them that worshipped his image. Now where have we any scripture or history either sacred or profane, that affirms that ever Mahomet wrought miracles before the beast of Rome; so far from him working mi-

rales before the beast, he would never work miracles before his own followers, even although they urged and pressed him very fore to do it. And so far from it, that Mahomet abhors the beast of Rome, and his plurality of idol worship; for they worship nothing but one idol, and that is Mahomet himself; and all Christians are by him accounted infidels. And how can it be said that Mahomet ever wrought miracles before him, when their religion are so much opposite the one to the other. I know that Mahomet is a false prophet, and hath been called by that name ever since he arose; but I cannot believe that it is him, which is meant by the Spirit in this text, nor yet in chapter xvi. 13. of this prophecy. Indeed the Roman clergy applies these texts unto him, to throw the odium from off themselves. And I apprehend many of our Protestant commentators have followed them in the same explanation, not properly examining the text. Now let us see who it is in ver. 19. "that are gathered together with the beast." Is it not the kings of the earth and their armies? And who is foremost always in those mischiefs and to kindle up war?—then the dignified clergy of Antichrist, to uphold his Holiness, and save their own clipped crowns. Now these that were gathered together with the beast, must be denominated the false prophet, "for they rise and fall together; for they are both taken

and cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone." Here may rise an objection—that the false prophet is always spoken of in the singular number. But we may as well object against the beast, being always spoken of in the singular number, for we know there hath been many Popes, and many Antichrists, yet they are all spoken of in the singular number, as well as the false prophet.

21 *And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.*

This verse seems to be darker than the former two. In the 20th verse, we have the final end of the beast and the false prophet; and as I understand it, the whole Antichristian state of Rome—"and they are cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone," which denotes a most severe judgment. But in this verse there is a remnant slain with the sword which proceedeth out of his mouth," who it is that is meant by this remnant, I am at a loss to know; however I shall give my opinion upon the text as it stands, and I think this remnant must be the remaining nations of the earth, to whom the sound of the everlasting gospel of Jesus Christ hath never yet approached, for in ver. 15th of this chapter, "there is a sharp sword goeth out of his mouth, and with it he shall smite the nations." And here

again. it is said, they shall be slain with the same sword; which sword I take to be the word of God, Hebrews iv. 12. "for the word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow; and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." And I think this slaying will be some very little time after the utter overthrow of the Antichristian darkness, which is spoken of by Isa. chap. lx. 2. "for behold, the darkness shall cover the earth; and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee, and the Gentiles shall come to thy light: and kings to the brightness of thy rising." These things will be accomplished, when the Jews are brought into the true church, with the fulness of the Gentile nations, in or about that time. An objection may be raised here, If this slaying mean a converting of the nations to the faith of the Christian doctrine, how shall the fowls be filled with their flesh? I am in no doubt but there will be wars, and much blood shed before all these things taketh place, and before all rule and power be put under Christ's feet; for we see the dragon is not bound yet, and as long as he is at liberty, we need not look for any other thing but wars and blood, and all mischief; and as he knoweth he has but a short time, he

will exert himself as far as he hath power. Now we are come to the latter end of this great vision concerning Antichrist, and that beast of Rome, which commenced at the beginning of the ninth chapter of this prophecy; and we see here in ver. 20th the end and overthrow of the beast and false prophet, and in ver. 21st the converting of the nations, into the true church of Jesus Christ, by the sword which proceedeth out of his mouth, which sword is the word of God; for the word of God is the sword of the Spirit. The inquisitive reader may be glad to know when these things will take place; but as to that I cannot give a positive answer, but I shall refer him to our Lord and Saviour's words, Matthew xxiv. 32. "Now learn a parable of the fig-tree: When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh; ver. 33. so likewise ye when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near even at the doors." Now although I cannot give a positive answer, yet I may venture a conjecture, and my opinion is this, that the fall of the beast of Rome, and the Antichristian state thereof, will be at, or near about the 1800 years of the Christian æra; and the ingathering of the nations to the church, will be about 11 years after, when the blessed state will commence. Now before I conclude this great vision of the beast and false prophet, I mean to clear it up, as far as

I can. That this false prophet spoken of in this vision, is no other than the Popish clergy; and to trace this matter up to its head and source, we find nothing but two classes of prophets in all the sacred volume of the scriptures; and these two are of very different natures, and they are all comprehended under two heads; viz. The first are under Jesus Christ their head, and they spake as they were moved and inspired by the Spirit of God, and of Jesus Christ, for he is the true and faithful witness of God unto us, "for no man hath seen God at any time, but the only begotten Son, who is always in the bosom of the Father." And again in another text, Christ saith, "I am one that beareth witness of myself, and the Father who sent me beareth witness of me." These two texts I think proves next to a demonstration, with many other of the like import, what I have said concerning the two witnesses in chap. xi. 3. Now the other class of prophets is all under another head, which is the devil and Satan. We read of many false prophets that was among the Jews, and they were all of them influenced and spake by the spirit of the devil, and told nothing but lies; and how could they speak any thing else, when they spake by his spirit, who is himself a liar and the father of it. Now by this argument you may think that this false prophet spoken of in this text, may be referred to Mahomet,

as well as the Popish clergy, as they are all under one head which is the devil. But we must consider his different ways of working in and by his servants. In the Jewish dispensation he wrought under the cloak of the Spirit of God, and his servants pretended that God had sent them as well as the true prophets did. Just so now he covers himself in the person of the Pope, and clothes the Pope under the name of Christ's vicegerent on earth, and invests him and his clergy with power to forgive sins on earth, and grant indulgences to sin, and all other superstitious worship which is practised in that great whore and mother of harlots, which hath corrupted the earth with her fornication. Now in the Jewish church, and in the Popish, he transforms himself into an angel of light, and cloaks himself under the name of Jesus Christ. But in the heathen world of old, and now at this present time, in the nations that know not God, and to whom the gospel hath never yet come, he had no need of such a cloak; for where they profess Mahometanism, he denies Jesus Christ altogether and setteth up another in his room. A false prophet Mahomet is, but he is not the false prophet mentioned in this vision; for the false prophet spoken of in this vision, deceived them which had received the mark of the beast; and sure Mahomet never received the mark of the beast, nor ever deceived any of the beast's

subjects; for how could he deceive them, when their religions are formed on quite different principles? And I think by what is said, we may see that Mahomet is not that false prophet spoken of in the text. And for further information, I shall refer you to 2 Pet. ii. where you will see, that those false teachers were to be amongst the professors of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and not amongst them that professed it not.

C H A P. XX.

AND I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand.

From the beginning of this chapter to the 4th verse, we have a description of this angel which I understand to be Jesus Christ, binding the devil and Satan for the space of a thousand years, and sealing him up in the bottomless pit, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled; and after that he must be loosed a little season. In the latter end of the last chapter, the beast and false prophet were both destroyed, that is, cast into the lake; so here in the beginning of this chapter, we have the devil bound and cast into the bottomless pit, and sealed up. Now he cannot do any more mischief upon this earth, neither as he transforms himself into an angel of light, nor in his own

colour of blackness and darkness; so we see that Jesus Christ hath received the kingdom from his God and his heavenly Father, which is spoken of in Daniel vii. 14, 27. "And all power in heaven and earth is committed unto him. And those who have their lot in that happy time, need not be affrighted of being deceived by the devil or Satan, during the time of the thousand years; for it is plainly and positively said in the text, that he shall deceive the nations no more until the thousand years be fulfilled.

4 *And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.*

The first clause of this verse represents "thrones, and they sat upon them." Now who is meant by this word *they*? To understand the meaning of *they* in this clause, we must have recourse to Dan. vii. 27. where it is said, "The kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." Now it appears from this text,

that the *they* which sat upon the thrones are the saints of the Most High; and as Jesus Christ maketh all the saints of God kings and priests unto God and his Father, it well becomes them to sit on thrones. The second clause, “and judgment was given unto them.” This seemeth to mean, that power is given unto the saints of the Most High, to judge and condemn the Antichristian beast that went before, and all false religion which is any way contrary to the pure and undefiled doctrine of Jesus Christ, and that they are enabled to do justly and honestly one towards another—and so doing justly, and loving mercy, and walking humbly with their God. And this is what God requires of all his saints in this world, according and concerning their moral walk and conversation. But not so concerning their justification; for that is a free gift given unto them by God, out of his great love and mercy, for the sake of Jesus Christ who purchased it for them with his own precious blood, and bestows it freely upon them without money and without price. The remaining part of this verse holds out unto us the glorious state “of them which were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, nor received his mark—and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.” It is said

in the third clause of this verse, *I saw*; but this is only a supplement. The text runs thus: "And the souls that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and the word of God." Now there is no doubt but all they that were beheaded for adhering unto Christ and his gospel are living and reigning with him in heaven at this time, and have lived and reigned with him from the beginning, even from Abel. We are not to think or suppose that those who were beheaded will be raised from their graves, and live on this earth; or that Christ is to descend from heaven and reign on this earth personally, for the space of a thousand years. This cannot be the meaning of this text; for the heavens must contain him until the restitution of all things. We must understand this dark text in general; for it is not easy to understand it in particulars. And as Christ is the head of the body the church, so all true believers in him are members of his flesh, and of his body, and of his bones, and of one another, whether they have arrived unto the heavenly glory, or are yet in the body on this earth; for all those that are washed from their sins with his precious blood, and clothed with the garment of his most perfect righteousness, is righteous, even as he is righteous; and so they live and reign with him, whether they be in heaven or on this earth; for the true church of God is but one, and the blood of

Jesus Christ is but one, with which he redeemed his own church and people unto himself, having neither spot nor wrinkle, or any such thing. What I understand by living and reigning with Christ a thousand years is this, that before the commencement of this period, we see that false doctrine of Antichrist destroyed, and the beast and false prophet cast into the lake of fire burning with brimstone, and Satan bound for a thousand years, which is just the period of the saints reigning with Christ. Now as the saints always live and triumph in and through Christ, so at this time they will reign and rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, when they see Christ their glorious head having conquered all his and their enemies, and triumphing over all those three, the red, the black, and the pale horses and their riders, which followed him when he went out conquering and to conquer. Now will not this give great joy unto Christ and all his true believing members, when Christ informeth us himself, that "there is great joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth," how much more must it be unto Christ and his church, when he seeth whole nations delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God and his dear Son, in whom they have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sin, and the salvation of their souls?

5 *But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.*

Now, as we are informed in verse 4th, that judgment was given to the saints—in my opinion the saints will be invested with the ruling power on earth, and they will be enabled to judge righteously between man and man, according to the law of God. But in this verse we are given to understand, that there will be many still not converted unto Christ and his gospel, who are called in this text *dead*, as they are called in other texts of Scripture; as where it is said, “ye are dead while ye live,” and as the apostle Paul says, Eph. ii. 4, 5, 6. “But God, who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sin, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and hath made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” Now in this text the apostle ascribeth the raising of them up unto God, in Christ, or by Christ. And in John xi. 25. “Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.” Verse 26th, “And whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die. Believest thou this?” Now in this text, Christ attributes the resurrection unto himself. The word *resurrection* in this text, and the *quickenings* and

raising up in the Ephesian text, are synonymous terms, and mean the same thing. So we must understand the word resurrection in this 5th verse, in a spiritual sense; and that is, Christ raiseth up all his own children from a state of nature, and the power of darkness, and transplants them into the glorious liberty of the sons of God; that is, into a state of grace.

6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

This verse has still a reference to the 4th, and to the thrones and they that sat upon them, and letteth us see that they are priests unto God and Christ. But why it is said that they shall reign with him a thousand years, seems to me to be rather dark, when the whole tenor of Scripture assureth us, that all true believers shall reign with Christ to all eternity. This text surely must have some other meaning than the great and the grand scope of the gospel, where we are informed that the true believers shall inherit an eternal weight of glory. Now what I understand by the thousand years reign, is this; That it points out unto us a period of time betwixt two great revolutions which will take place on this earth. Now, as the woman-church, as soon as she brought forth, and was delivered of her man

child, was obliged to fly into the wilderness to the place prepared for her, for the space of 1260 years, during Antichrist's reign; so, at the time of his fall, the kingdom shall be given to the saints of the Most High, and then they shall sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel; that is, they shall rule the church in righteousness, and have all power on this earth put into their hands. And it appears in this text, that the saints of the Most High will be endued with wisdom from on high, to govern and direct all their affairs with prudence and discretion, both in their spiritual and temporal things; their spiritual things according to the gospel of Jesus Christ, by faith in him alone for all their justification and salvation; and their temporal things according to the law of God, as far as our human nature can fulfil it in our fallen state. And from the time that this blessed state of the church beginneth, it will continue until the rise of that erroneous set of people called *Gog and Magog*, which will be at or about the end of the thousand years; so as Antichrist ruled and triumphed over the true church for the space of 1260 years. The time is fast approaching when he shall be dethroned; and then the saints shall take the kingdom, and lead them captive whose captives they were, and reign and triumph with Christ for the space of a thousand years.

7 *And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison.*

This verse gives a dreadful presage against the church. When that old arch enemy is loosed from his chain, we may be sure that he will exert all his malice and fury against the saints, as he has done from the beginning.

8 *And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to the battle; the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.*

This verse informs us that he will deceive the nations in the four quarters of the earth, and gather them together, even Gog and Magog, to battle; "the number of whom is as the sand of the sea." This must be an extraordinary number of people degenerated from the true doctrine of the gospel of Jesus Christ, in the course of this thousand years reign of the saints; for we are not to understand that all people on the earth are to be saints; for the 5th verse forbiddeth that, where mention is made that the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. What I understand by the word *dead* is this, that those people who are not converted into the gospel, but lying dead in sin and trespass, yet they are still subjected under the power and rule of the saints; so that they will not have it in their power to persecute the church of Christ, as the Antichristian state hath done

during his reign. But at or about the end of the thousand years, those that are called dead will live again, by wresting the power out of the hand of the saints; then they will live in power and great glory for a little time, with the devil on their head as captain-general, which will burst out like the flood-gates of hell, against Jesus Christ and his church. And no doubt but the inquisitive reader will be glad to know who is meant by Gog and Magog. I understand these two names to signify Jew and Gentile; for I find that Gog is descended from Ruben the eldest son Jacob, and Magog is descended from Japheth Noah's eldest son. And of these two will the whole conspiracy consist, which will rise up against the saints in all the four quarters of the earth.

9 And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city; and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.

Now those who have faith in Jesus Christ, and a love unto his church and members, will tremble with fear for the church, when they see her encompassed about with such an innumerable company of enemies ready to devour her, even as old Eli trembled for the ark of God, when it was taken from Israel by the Philistines. But behold the triumph and joy that the church may always have over her

enemies by Jesus Christ the captain of their salvation, who is always both able and willing to preserve his own church and people. Now here we see in the last clause of this verse, that, in the greatest extremity, Jesus Christ will make his appearance with fire and with his chariots, like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebukes with flames of fire; so we see the end of this innumerable multitude of people devoured with fire from God out of heaven. O but this is great encouragement for the church of believers, to put their trust in him by faith who hath said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." I may just observe here, that the Lord works differently in the dispensation of his providence towards the sons of men; for in the destruction of Antichrist, he worketh with the instrumentality of men; but here he devours this great conspiracy with fire from heaven, as he did Sodom and Gomorrah, or like Jonah's gourd; for it may be said of them as it is said of it, they rose in a night, and their fall will be in an instant.

10 *And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.*

Here we see that the devil and Satan shall never have it again in his power, with all his instruments of darkness, to rule and persecute the

church of Christ any more ; for we see him in this verse cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, along with the beast and false prophet, his associates ; and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever. Now, whether this torment that the devil is to undergo be a local punishment or not, I shall leave unto men of more abilities to determine, if they can. But I am pretty sure that he will be so close confined that he will not have it in his power to do any more mischief unto the sons of men. And I think this will be a very great torment to him, who always gloried in doing mischief unto the sons of men, and in bruising the heel of Jesus Christ. But now he hath got his own head both bruised and broken in this lake for ever ; for there is no more account of him ever being relieved or loosed out of his prison.

11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat upon it. From whose face the earth and heaven fled away ; and there was found no place for them.

In this verse, and what follows to the end of the chapter, is a representation of a heavy judgment upon the dead. Now I know it is thought, and said, and generally believed, that this is the representation of the last and general judgment of the last and great day of retribution of all things. But I beg to be excused when I differ from that opinion. Indeed

I grant it is very emblematical of the last judgment, as all seats or thrones of impartial judgment are, when they are administered in righteousness, acquitting the innocent and punishing the guilty; but I do not think that this is the last judgment; and my reasons for it are these: First, we have in Dan. vii. 9. and downwards, the representation of a throne and of a judgment, as emblematical of the last judgment, as this in this text; and yet that judgment is restricted unto that nameless beast which Daniel saw, which is the great Roman empire. And that judgment mentioned by Daniel, comprehends all the judgments which God in his providence hath inflicted, and will inflict, upon the remains of that empire, which is the Antichristian state thereof. Likewise we have in Dan. xii. 1, 2. another judgment emblematical of the last and general judgment; and yet this is restricted unto the overthrow of the beast of Rome, and the ingathering of Daniel's people, which surely meant the calling of the Jews unto the knowledge and faith of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The second reason I find, is in Rev. vi. 12. unto the end, where we have another judgment emblematical of the last judgment; and yet it is restricted to the overthrow of the Pagan state of the Roman empire, by Constantine the Great. We have another in chap. xvi. 17. to the end; but more particularly in verse 20. And this here points

directly to the overthrow of Antichrist. Now let any man of an unbiaſſed mind examine all theſe texts without prejudice, he will plainly ſee that none of them refers unto the judgment of the laſt and great day; for all thoſe judgments appear to me to be executed in a temporal way on this earth, upon the enemies of Jeſus Chriſt and his church. Now, as all theſe judgments have ſet and appointed times for them, and as they will take place at their fixed ſeaſons; juſt ſo we have it here in this text before us; for at the end of the thouſand years, or poſſibly about 150 years after, (for it is ſaid Satan muſt be looſed a little ſeaſon) and then this judgment commences, when Satan is looſed out of his priſon, and hath deceived the nations. Now in verſe 5th it is ſaid that “the reſt of the dead lived not again until the thouſand years were finiſhed.” As long as Satan was kept in his priſon the dead lived not; that is, they were quiet and harmleſs, becauſe they had no power committed unto them to do miſchief. But as ſoon as he was looſed, he ſoon ſtirred up his infernal legions from the four quarters of the earth. And to make his laſt effort to wreſt the kingdom out of the hands of Chriſt and his ſaints. And no doubt but he will have power given him to raiſe up this great conſpiracy againſt the ſaints for the trial of their faith, and that they may be purged and made clean in the imputed righteouſneſs

of Jesus Christ by faith. But all the power and strength he may be made master of to deceive the nations, will only be to bring on his own destruction; for there is no power to be given into his hand equal with that which he had, when he gave the beast his power, and seat, and great authority. There is no doubt but he will exert himself to the utmost of what power he hath; but all he can do will do nothing for him, but only plunge him and his party into utter ruin and destruction. Now my third reason that I advance is from Matt. xxv. 31. to the end. Our blessed Lord and Saviour informs his disciples, and John amongst the rest, in the plainest manner, the way and manner of his appearing at that great day of accounts; and gives them and us, and all that will hear his voice in time, to understand the way and manner of his whole procedure both towards the righteous and the wicked. Now I cannot think that Christ would represent this great and last judgment in this book of visions, in such a dark and visionary way, when he had informed John so plainly by word of mouth, when he tabernacled with him on this earth. And besides this, let the texts be compared, and we will see this far outshines the other in glory, and sublimity, and heavenly grandeur. When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy an-

gels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from the other, as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats. Now when all those judgments have times perfected unto them, both by the prophet Daniel, which we may see in his 12th chap. 7th, 11th, and 12th verses, and likewise in these visions of John. Now, suppose we cannot understand positively the identical time that these judgments will take place, nevertheless we are well assured that they will take place at the time appointed; for the word of God standeth sure. And I think this is a very strong argument that none of all those judgments is the last and general one; for Christ tells us himself, "of that day and hour knoweth no man, no not the angels of heaven; but my Father only." Now I come to the text itself, and what I understand by the earth and the heavens flying away from before the face of him that sat on the throne. By the *earth* I understand all unbelievers in Jesus Christ, and by the *heavens* I understand the devil and Satan that deceived them; for as he is called the Prince of the power of the air, so he may be called here, in this text, the Heaven.

12 *And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened; which is the book of life:*

and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

I understand here in this verse, the word *dead*, to be the same with the word *earth* in the 11th verse; for as the earth is in itself a dead mass of matter, so is all them that are strangers unto Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour; they are likewise dead in trespasses and sin, and can no more spiritualize their nature, than a clod of earth can start into life of itself. Now, in this text, we have nothing but the dead standing before God; but in Christ's description of the last and general judgment, we have all nations gathered together before him, both the dead and living, and all shall receive their sentence, whether it be good or evil. Now, as Adam in that day and hour he sinned he died; even so is all his posterity, until they be quickened with the Spirit of Jesus Christ, who is the light of life, then they become light in the Lord, then they live and reign with Christ, whether they be departed this temporal life, and arrived to those heavenly mansions of glory which Christ hath prepared for them, or whether they remain in the body on this earth, they all live in him. Now, as there is not one word concerning the living standing before God in this text, from the 11th verse to the end of this chap. to receive their sentence, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, in-

herit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world ;" so it cannot be the last and general judgment, for where a thing is general, all the parts is taken in, and nothing left out ; but here in this text we have all the living left out, and nothing but the dead taken in.

13 *And the sea gave up the dead which were in it ; and death and hell delivered up the dead that were in them ; and they were judged every man according to their works.*

Now, as to the word *sea* in this text, I cannot understand it to mean the material sea of waters which encompasses this earth ; for it is only a figurative expression, borrowed from the material sea, and alludes directly to the sea that is mentioned in chap. xvi. 3. of this prophecy, on which the second vial was poured out, which was no other than the Antichristian state of Rome ; and there is no doubt, but Antichrist will be at this time setting up his head again in some shape or other. And as to death and hell delivering up the dead which were in them, it must allude to the pale horse and his rider in chap. vi. 8. of these visions, where power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth. Now, what I understand by all these figurative expressions in this text, is, wars, famine, pestilence, earthquakes, and all other

instruments of cruelty which was given unto the red, the black, and the pale horses and their riders, to kill and destroy mankind. And power was given to the devil and Satan to exercise all those as his instruments at certain times and divers periods, as God himself saw meet to punish men for their sins, and for denying the Lord God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, the only remedy against sin, and following the devices of Satan, and their own reprobate heart.—The last clause of this verse tells us, that every man was judged according to their works; that is, all that powerful army of Gog and Magog, on which this judgment sits. In short, it is all them that are found out of Christ at that time, which is at the end of the thousand years; for at the end of the thousand years reign, this judgment commences and takes place.

14 *And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire; this is the second death.*

Now, we see the beast and false prophet at the end of chap. xix. and the devil in the 10th ver. of this chap. all of them cast into the lake of fire burning with brimstone, there to be tormented day and night for ever and ever. So here in this verse, we have death and hell cast in along with them; and as it appears here to be the last overthrow of the devil and Satan, so it is with all his instruments of which he

had power given him to exercise over the sons of men; all share the same fate, all are cast into the lake and sealed up, so that him nor them can destroy men no more. The last clause of this verse informs us, that this is the second death. This pre-supposes that there is another death before this, and likewise that there will be another after it. Now, the first death commenced with Adam's fall; for the apostle says, "in Adam all died;" so here this is called the second death, as a punishment for that first death, which was sin; and this second death will continue and last unto the end of time, when that third and last and eternal death will take place, which will never have an end. And this is clearly taught in the scriptures, that this will be the final end of all them that died in Adam, "which are not made alive in Christ, and found in him, not having their own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is by the faith of Jesus Christ, the righteousness of God, which is by faith."

15 *And whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire.*

As I said before, we see the beast and false prophet, the devil, and death, and hell, all specified by name, and cast into the lake; so in this verse, we have whosoever is not written in the book of life cast in along with them; and these which are not written are the dead mentioned in the 12th verse, that stood before

God, and were judged according to their works. Now, from the 11th verse to the end of this chap. we have no mention made of any which were written in the book of life, neither specified by name or otherwise; so I conclude, that this judgment cannot be the last and general one. For according to the account that Jesus Christ gave of it unto his disciples, it doth not agree and correspond with the account we have of this judgment in this text before us; for our Saviour's definition of the last judgment, is, "he will gather all nations before him, and he will separate the sheep from the goats, and every one will receive their sentence according to their deeds done in the body," and be assigned each party unto their proper place of abode. But here in the description of this text, they are all thrown into the lake of fire which burneth with brimstone, which will never have an end.

C H A P. XXI.

AND I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

Here the divine enters into a very great and grand description of the latter day's glory of the church of Christ. But some of the great and learned expositors hath concluded, that this is a description of the saints arrived into the heavenly glory, or the spirits of just men

made perfect in heaven, as they call it the church triumphant. But I think, that the true church of Christ triumpheth over this world, even when they are in this world, thro' the faith that is in Christ Jesus; for the apostle says, "by faith we rejoice, in hope of the glory of God, which hope entereth within the vail as the anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast." But whatsoever it may be called, it will be a most happy time, and a glorious tranquillity to the people who have their lot under that dispensation. For we see, in the latter end of the former chap. the devil and all his instruments which he had power given him to employ against Christ and his church, all thrown into the lake. We may be well assured that there will a very great change take place, when wars and devastation, and the destroying of men by those instruments of cruelty, shall be no more; when men shall beat their swords into plough-shares, and their spears into pruning hooks; and when they shall learn the art of war no more; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea. I understand by the last clause of this verse, that all those calamities which is mentioned before, are passed away, and gone off the stage for ever; as the apostle Paul describeth it of the man that is renewed again in Christ Jesus, he becomes a new creature, all old things are done away, and behold

all things are become new. It is just so here, when our most gracious God will pour down the glorious influences of his Holy Spirit into the hearts of men, by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, then they will live as brethren of one family, and as sons and daughters, and heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ; then the parched wilderness becomes springs of water, and the barren desert becomes a fruitful field. "And there was no more sea." I understand by this, that neither the devil, nor Antichrist, nor that conspiracy of Gog and Magog, nor any other thing, shall have power to hurt or destroy in all God's holy mountain; then shall the prophecy of Isaiah, in chap. ii. 2, 3, 4. be fulfilled, with many other of like import.

2 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Here the beloved disciple informs us, that he is the same person who saw all the former visions which is contained in this book. And he likewise letteth us know, that he saw this great vision of the holy city, the new Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven. Now this text tells us plainly, that this holy city of the new Jerusalem is not in heaven; for it cometh down from God out of heaven. And we are well assured, there will be a very great effusion of grace and the influence of the

Holy Spirit of God, to prepare the church as a bride adorned with faith in Christ her head and husband.

3 *And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.*

Here that question which Solomon put in his prayer at the dedication of the temple which he built, is verified at this time, when he says, "But will God in very deed dwell with men on this earth; behold the heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house which I have built?" Now with what great love and mercy and goodness, doth God display his kindness unto us the children of sinful men, and his great condescension, that he, out of his pure and unmerited love unto us poor miserable sinners, manifested Jesus Christ in the flesh, when he tabernacled in the human nature on this earth, and hath been with his church and people ever since, by his word and Spirit, guiding them into all truth; and to reveal unto us this great and glorious dispensation, which shall assuredly take place at this time, when he shall have removed all obstacles out of the way, and when God himself shall be with them and be their God.

4 *And God shall wipe away all tears from*

their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

This verse corroborates with the first verse, that all these old things are passed away. We are not however to understand by this text, that men will not die; all that I understand by it is, that men shall not be put to death by those instruments of cruelty which hath so long been used in the destruction of men, which are now passed away and gone. Isaiah prophesied of this very time, (chap. lxxv. 17,—21.) and informs us, that “the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old, shall be accursed.” What I understand here by the child, is one that is born again by the Spirit. And yet we see he shall die; that is, the separation of the soul from the body. But the sinner dying an hundred years old; that is, the unbeliever, shall be separated both soul and body from God. This 4th verse intimates to us, that all these troubles and calamities which caused tears, and sorrows, and crying, and pain, are all passed away and gone off the stage for ever; for we find no more mention made of them in all this vision.

5 And he that sat upon the throne said, behold I make all things new. And he said unto me write, for these words are true and faithful.

Here Jesus Christ informs John of these things that he had seen and heard in the for-

mer verses, which was all made new. This verse corroborates directly with Isaiah's prophecy, chap. lxxv. 17, 18. "For behold I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered nor come into mind; but be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create; for behold I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy." And the apostle Peter says, "Nevertheless, we according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." Now I understand these new heavens to mean the church, and that she will be new organised in a much more glorious form, than ever she appeared before on this earth. And this most beautiful church will be stationed on the earth, or else what need for a new earth—there is no need of earth in the heavenly world, neither do we read of any earth being there, where the holy angels and the spirits of just men made perfect, are enjoying the full fruition of bless at God's right hand, where there is fulness of pleasure and joy for ever more. Now as the curse is at this time removed from off the church, by the blessed Seed of Abraham, in whom all nations are to be blessed, so no doubt but it will be removed from off the earth likewise in a great measure. The apostle Paul saw this time afar off, as we read Rom. viii. 19,—24. and especially in the 21st verse, "Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corrup-

tion, into the glorious liberty of the sons of God." Now it was he that sat upon the throne which made them all new; for he says with a mark of observation, Behold! I make all things new. This *I* that is mentioned here must be Jesus Christ; "For by him all things were created, in heaven and earth; and he upholds all things by the word of his power; and he works according to the counsel of his own will, both in heaven and in earth; for all things are committed to him, and he is Lord of all to the glory of God the Father." The last clause of this verse is a commission to John to "write, for these words are true and faithful." This gives us a clear demonstration, that Jesus Christ is the true and faithful witness sent of God unto us, to reveal his mind and will unto the sons of men for their salvation.

6 And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

The first clause of this verse confirms all that John saw and heard in the former verses, "It is done," that is, all is done and finished by the great I am, the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. The last clause informs us who shall be the inhabitants and citizens of this new heaven and new earth, "I will give unto him that is athirst." Christ

says, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled," Matt. v. 6. Again, "Jesus answered and said, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of heaven, or of God," John iii. 3. And in John vi. 44. Christ saith, "no man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day." Now I think these texts, with many others which might be mentioned in the scriptures of truth, disannuls and revokes man's free will, which is so much depended upon and preached up now a-days; for if we cannot come to Christ except the Father draw us, and if no man can see the kingdom of God, except he be born again, Where is our free will? I shall leave it to better judges than me to find out. Now him which is athirst, mentioned in this text, must be him which is born again, and mightily drawn by the almighty power of God, thro' his word and Spirit; for it is written in the prophets, "And they shall be all taught of God; every man therefore that hath heard and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me; and he that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." Now those which are thus described above, are them that thirsts after righteousness, and Jesus Christ; for he is the Lord our righteousness; and he declares he will not only give them the water of life, but

he will give them the fountain of the water of life freely ; which fountain is himself.

7 He that overcometh shall inherit all things : and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

Now who or what is it that they are to overcome ? We find chap. xii. 10, 11. of this book, “ And I heard a loud voice, saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ ; for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony ; and they loved not their lives unto the death.” Here in this 7th verse is a most glorious promise, “ He that overcometh shall inherit all things.” Now in these two verses in chap. xii. we are informed who we are to overcome, it is the devil, the accuser of our brethren, and of ourselves likewise ; and by what means we are enabled to overcome, “ it is by the blood of the Lamb.” This is by faith in Jesus Christ alone, without any of our own works ; “ For after that the kindness and love of God unto man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us.” Jesus Christ told his disciples, just a little before his bloody sweat in the garden, and his dolorous passion on the cross, “ that in the world they should have tribulation, but in me ye shall have

peace;" and he bids them "be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." Now did not Christ overcome the devil in his temptations in the wilderness? But more fully he overcame him upon the cross, "when he spoiled principalities and powers, and triumphed over them in it," that is, in his own person. For even when he was nailed hands and feet to the tree, then he trampled and trode the devil and all the powers of darkness under his feet, and led him captive as a conquered enemy; and opened up unto us a new and a living way unto the throne of grace, that we might find grace to help in time of need.

8 But the fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone which is the second death.

Now this text is worthy of due consideration. We see in the first clause, the fearful and unbelieving are joined together; and in the second clause, all those abominable sins are enumerated. Now all these sins are expressly against the holy law of God. And what did Jesus Christ come into this world in the human nature for, but to redeem us and to save us from our sins. Now is not all these sins that are mentioned here in this text, and many more which we find in that black catalogue mentioned by the apostle Paul, Gal. v. I say,

are not all these our sins? Is not our nature enmity itself against God? "for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be; for the very root and spring of all those sins is ingrafted in our very nature; for the heart of man is desperately wicked, and deceitful above all things, who can know it? But God doth know it; for he it is alone that searcheth the heart and trieth the reins of the children of men. And he hath told us what is in our heart: There is nothing in it but a body of sin and death. And we are bound by all the ties of creation to believe him; for he who knows all things certainly knows the heart of man. Now, few that profess the Christian name, but will confess that they are sinners. But I believe they only look at their outward actions, not considering the evil concupiscence which is lodged in the heart; and therefore thinking to amend their life, they put on resolutions to alter their course, and live more holy and more conformed unto the holy law of God; and by so doing we think that God will accept our good works, and be merciful unto us for our own performance. But this is not the way, our hearts must first be purified by faith in Christ Jesus, and we must overcome the old serpent the devil, and our own wicked hearts, from which all these abominable sins proceed, by the blood of the Lamb, that is, by believing

that Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God, and what he did and suffered in this world was on our account ; and that he hath conquered all his and our enemies, and made full reconciliation between God and us, miserable sinners. For by his righteous life, he fulfilled the holy law of God in all its demands ; and in pouring out his soul unto death, he gave full satisfaction unto the justice of God for all our sins, which we have committed, or ever shall commit, against the holy law of God. Now he did all this for us poor miserable sinners, who deserved nothing of mercy, but richly deserved being thrown into this lake of fire burning with brimstone, which we see in this text is the portion of all unbelievers and liars. Now what I understand by liars in this text, is the same with unbelievers ; for he that believeth not in Jesus Christ, does all that in him lies, to make God a liar ; but God findeth him out in his wickedness, and proveth him a liar, by saving them that believe.

There is a sin which our Saviour calls the sin against the Holy Ghost, “ which shall never be forgiven men neither in this world nor in that which is to come.” Many great and learned men have explained what this sin is ; some one way and some another. But to be short, my opinion is this, that it is neither more nor less, than a final unbelief of the record that God hath given unto us of his Son

in the scriptures of truth; for the scriptures was dictated by the Holy Ghost. And whosoever rejects the scriptures, commits the sin against the Holy Ghost; for they reject the only remedy which God hath proposed in the counsel of his good will to men for their salvation. Now for all that I have said on this text, believers need not be discouraged; for hear what the Lord saith by the mouth of his prophet Isaiah, chap. i. 18. "Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Likewise 1 John i. 7. "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

9 *And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.*

It seemingly appears in this verse, that he which talked with John all along in this chapter, before this verse, was Jesus Christ; for here another angel comes and talketh with him. And it appears that this angel had received a commission from Jesus Christ to shew unto this beloved disciple, all this great glory

in which the true church will triumph in the latter days.

10 *And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.*

Now this holy city, and the bride the Lamb's wife, mentioned in the last clause of the 9th verse, means the self and the same thing. And this holy city, and the bride the Lamb's wife, descended out of heaven from God unto our first parents, in the garden of Eden, when the Lord condescended to give them that first and gracious promise, that the Seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent; and it hath remained in the world ever since. But in the early ages of the world it appeared but with a dim lustre, and was given unto the fathers by signs, and types, and sacrifices, until the fulness of time was come, when the blessed Seed was manifested in the flesh; then it shone with more glory and splendour, and will continue so to do unto the end of time. But it hath pleased God, through his condescending love and mercy, to give unto his servant John, and the church by him, those great visions which are contained in this book, concerning his bride and wife, what she should suffer from the malice of Satan, and wicked men his instruments, by persecutions both by false doctrine, and persecuting unto death those

that maintained the truth, and held fast the doctrine of the faith of Jesus. And these visions inform us what shall befall the church or this holy city, from the first outgoing of the gospel, unto the end of all time. Now there are times given from the first preaching of the gospel, unto the end of the Antichristian state, which will reach unto the 1800th year of the Christian æra; and from thence to the commencement of that blessed state spoken of by Daniel, chap. xii. 12. will be eleven years or thereby; and from that unto that judgment mentioned in the latter end of chap. xx. will be one thousand years. Now the amount of these numbers is 2811 years; and from thence we have no more time given, but a most happy and glorious dispensation of the church unto the end; and neither men nor angels knoweth when that will take place.

11 Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.

Now at this time the bride the Lamb's wife will appear most glorious indeed, when she shines with the glory of God upon her. "And her light was like a stone most precious." This is the stone that the Jewish builders rejected, and is still rejected by many who profess the Christian name. But now it is become the head of the corner, as it was prophesied by Isaiah, chap. xxviii. 16. and by the Psalmist,

Pſalm cxviii. 22. From this verſe the angel goeth on diſplaying the glory of the church the Lamb's wife, in a metaphorical figure of a moſt magnificent city, with walls and gates, and her citizens adorned with the glory of God and of Jeſus Chriſt.

12 And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Iſrael.

I underſtand the firſt clauſe of this verſe, “and had a wall great and high,” to allude to the encampment of the children of Iſrael in the wilderneſs, which order of their encampment was given by God himſelf unto Moſes in the 2d chapter of Numbers throughout. And as that encampment was only a typical representation of the true church of Chriſt, ſo it had only earthly walls about it, which were the twelve tribes of the children of Iſrael, pitched in their order, three tribes on each ſide, which made the walls four ſquare. As to the reſt of this verſe, it explains itſelf; every tribe is a gate, and every head of a tribe is an angel. And the names muſt allude to the twelve princes which preſided over each tribe, which are called angels here in this text; and theſe twelve princes represented the twelve ſons of Jacob, as they were the heads of the houſe of their fathers.

13 On the eaſt, three gates; on the north,

three gates ; on the south, three gates ; and on the west, three gates.

This verse directly agrees with the encampment explained in the former verse.

14 *And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.*

Now it is most certain that the twelve apostles propagated and laid the foundation of the Christian dispensation of the church. And, as to the wall itself of this city, the apostles were and are both the foundation and wall ; for after they had laid the foundation, they, in their life time, were a wall about the church against every error and every enemy that might creep into her unawares, either by false doctrine, or by cunning, crafty men, lying in wait to deceive. And their writings in the New Testament are still a wall of fire about the church until this day, and will continue until the end.

Now it is a truth that Jesus Christ is the chief foundation of the church ; and the apostles built on this foundation of Christ, which was himself ; for other foundation can no man lay, than that which is laid, which is Christ. The apostle Paul explains this verse most beautifully in Eph. ii. 20. " And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." And the 21st verse of that chapter is still more clear and expres-

five, "In whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth into an holy temple in the Lord." These two verses explain all this great vision which John saw; and I have no doubt but this great apostle of the Gentiles saw the same thing when he was caught up into the third heavens, and saw and heard things which were not lawful for him to utter; because this great vision was reserved for John the beloved disciple, to hear, and see, and reveal it unto the church. And this Ephesian text confirms me in the belief that this great city is nothing else than the true church of Jesus Christ, represented under all those characters and emblems of a most grand city, embellished with all the pomp and splendour which all the eloquence of language can display or utter. And as I said before, the true church of God is but one, whether in heaven or on this earth. For my part, I read in the Scriptures of truth of no more than one. There is no doubt but there are some in heaven and some on earth; but all true believers are members of that one body which connects them all into one.

15 *And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof.* 16 *And the city lieth four square, and the length is as large as the breadth, and he measured the city with the reed*

twelve thousand furlongs, the length and the breadth and the height of it are equal.

This measurement amounts to 1500 English miles.

17 *And he measured the wall thereof an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel.*

Now, according to our way of thinking, the wall of a city would be much superior in measure to the city, as the wall compasses round about the city; but here it is quite contrary; the city is far superior in measurement to the wall. And this alludes directly to the twelve apostles of the Lamb; for they were but few in number compared with the body of the true church.

18 *And the building of the wall of it was of jasper; and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass.*

I observe a difference here betwixt the building of the wall, and the foundation of the wall. The building of the wall is only said to be of jasper, and the city pure gold; but the foundations of the wall of the city are said to be garnished with all manner of precious stones. Now the two following verses allude to Aaron's breast-plate, which had the names of the twelve tribes of Israel engraven upon it, which gave responses and answers when it was consulted in the name of the Lord. Just so Jesus

Christ answers all his believing members in all their wants, especially in their greatest distress, when they call upon him by prayer and supplication, with an unfeigned faith.

21 *And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.*

We see here that this verse still alludes to the twelve apostles of the Lamb. Every one of them is compared unto a pearl; and the city, that is, the body of the true church, is compared unto pure gold.

22 *And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb, are the temple of it.*

Here John informs us that he saw no temple in it. Now in the encampment of the Israelites in the wilderness, the tabernacle was placed in the very centre of the whole congregation; and Moses and Aaron, with the Levites, were pitched on the east side of it; and God descended into the tabernacle, and spake with Moses in the very centre of the whole tribes of Israel. Even so, under the gospel dispensation, God descendeth and speaketh unto the heart of every true believer, by his word and Spirit.

23 *And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of*

God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

Jesus Christ tells us, that he is the light of the world; and all those that believe in him shall never walk in darkness.

24 And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.

This verse corroborates directly with the former; for them that are saved do walk in the light of it. That is, they walk in the light of the gospel by the faith of Jesus Christ. "And the kings of the earth." We must understand the word *kings* here to mean the same thing that the word *saved* doth in the former clause of the verse; for Christ makes all his saved ones kings. And they shall bring their glory into it. That is, they shall give all their glory and honour unto the church; they shall honour the church with their substance; and in so doing they give glory unto Jesus Christ; "for whosoever giveth a cup of cold water to one of the least of these my brethren, they shall in no wise lose their reward."

25 And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day; for there shall be no night there.

Now as God is always attentive to the prayers of all his saved ones, and that he is the hearer of prayer, shows us that there will be no night in this holy city; for the ears of God are open unto the prayers of his saints at all

times, when he is address'd with the prayer of faith in Christ Jesus. Now, as God testifieth in the latter end of the third verse, that he will be with them, and be their God; it is impossible that there should be any night there; for God is light, and in him there is no darkness at all. And in the latter end of the 23d verse, it is said that the Lamb is the light thereof. Now it is simply impossible that there can be any night where God and the Lamb manifest their glory, which will be done in this holy city in great majesty and glory.

26 *And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.*

Who is meant by that word *they*? I understand the word *they* to mean the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb. Psalm cvii. 3, 7. "And gathered them out of the lands, from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south; and he led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation." John xi. 52. "And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God which were scattered abroad." Eph. i. 10. "That in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him." We see by the above texts who is meant by the word *they*; and these nations which are brought into this city

are Christ's glory and honour ; for they are the travail of his soul," *Isaiah liii. 11.*

27 *And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie ; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.*

For the explanation of this last verse, I shall refer to the 8th verse of this chapter. See what is said on it.

C H A P. XXII.

AND he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

This clearly points out unto us the Spirit of God which John saw, under the similitude of a pure river of water ; for it is certain that no man can see God, but under some similitude or other. John the Baptist saw the Spirit in the form of a dove, at the baptism of Jesus Christ ; and the disciples of Jesus on the day of Pentecost saw him in the likeness of cloven tongues. So here, in this text, John the Divine saw him under the representation of a pure river of water proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. Now, as Jesus Christ represents the Spirit, under the similitude of water, as in *John iv. 10, 14,* and *chap. vii. 38,* so by this pure river of water I understand to be meant the Holy Spirit of God.

2 *In the midst of the street of it, and on either*

side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

In these two verses is pointed out unto us the Trinity of persons in the Godhead; for, first, we have the Spirit proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. Here the throne of God is also the throne of the Lamb; for both God and the Lamb are mentioned as two distinct persons, and yet there is but one throne, which joins them both in one; for God hath declared in his word, that none shall mount into his throne. Now, as the Lamb claims the same right to the throne as God doth, proves him to be God equal with the Father; and the pure river of water, viz. the Spirit proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, which proves him to be God equal with the Father and Son; for, as I said before, God hath said, "none shall mount into my throne." Now, by this text, we see that all the three persons have an equal share in the throne, which proves them to be one God. And this is the well of water springing up into everlasting life, spoken of by our Saviour in John iv. 14. to the Samaritan woman; and in many texts of Scripture, the Spirit is represented under the similitude of water. I understand in the second verse by the *tree of life*, which is in the midst of the street, and on

either side of the river, to be Jesus Christ himself, which bare twelve fruits. It is said in the text, "twelve manner of fruits;" but the word *manner* is only a supplement. And I do not understand properly the meaning of the word *manner*; for it appears to me that the tree beareth twelve different kinds, or opposite fruit. But according to the whole tenor of Scripture, the fruit that Christ bears is all of one kind, as his name imports—Jesus the Saviour, as it was told by the angel, he shall save his people from their sins. I understand the twelve fruits to be the twelve apostles of the Lamb, whom he chose when he was on this earth, and commanded them at his departure, to preach the gospel unto every creature; and assuring them, while they did so, they should always have his presence with them. These twelve fruits likewise represent the twelve apostles of the Lamb as being the twelve foundations of the wall of the city of the New Jerusalem, mentioned in chap. xxi. 14. I understand the Holy City and the New Jerusalem to be synonymous terms which mean the same thing, that is, the true church of Christ. "And yielded her fruit every month." That is, the twelve foundations of the church, viz. the twelve apostles, yield their fruit every month, in the gospel which they preached and taught in the New Testament. We are not to think here, that they yielded their or her

fruit, but once or at one time in every month, but at all times, while time remains, and while the New Testament endureth; and that will be as long as the world standeth. "And the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." By the last clause of this verse, I understand the righteousness of Jesus Christ and his shed blood. What I mean by the righteousness and shed blood of Jesus Christ is this, "But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons," Gal. iv. 4, 5. "Now what things soever the law saith, it saith unto them that are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God," Rom. iii. 19. Now as concerning Christ's righteousness—when he assumed the human nature, and was made under the law, it became him to fulfil that law which he was made under, by the appointment of God his heavenly Father, as he expressed himself, "it behoveth us to fulfil all righteousness." Now I think it will not be denied by any of them that profess his name, that he hath fulfilled it to the utmost point that the law could demand. And who was it for that he fulfilled it? It was not for himself, but for us, poor miserable sinners, as we see above; it was to redeem them that were un-

der the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. Now his keeping and fulfilling the law, as our great head and representative in our room and stead, constitutes that righteousness which is often spoken of in the Scriptures, and is always called the righteousness of God or of Jesus Christ; in which righteousness all them that believe in Christ Jesus shall be exalted, Psalm lxxxix. 16. Now one would think that when Christ had fulfilled all the demands of the law, that it had no more to say to him; but we see it far otherwise; for his fulfilling of the law was but one part of that great work of man's redemption, which was committed unto him as Mediator between God and man; for the whole body of whom he is the head had broken the holy law of God; therefore he was obliged to redeem his whole body from under that law with his own precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. And this he did when he himself bare our sins in his own body on the tree, and redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, "curled is every one that hangeth on a tree." Now I will just observe a text here concerning a prophecy of Abraham, Genesis xxii. 14. "And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh; as it is said to this day, in the mount of the Lord it shall be seen." Now this little word *it* signifieth our Lord Jesus

Christ; and Abraham in Spirit saw him on this mount in the land of Moriah, which was called mount Calvary by the Jews in after ages, giving himself for us an offering and a sacrifice unto God for a sweet smelling favour. And to prove that this *it* signifies our Lord Jesus Christ, only read the first promise that was given unto our first parents in the garden, Genesis iii. 15. where it is said, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; *it* shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Here we see that this *it* and the Seed of the woman meaneth the self and same thing; and the apostle Paul applieth this Seed directly unto Christ, Gal. iii. 16. There might be a great deal more said on this subject; but I think there is enough to prove the proposition laid down, that the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. For I cannot find in all the Scriptures any thing to correspond with the healing of men's souls, but the righteousness and shed blood of Jesus Christ. Men may talk of virtue and piety as much as they will, and strive to perform them as far as they can; yet none of these can heal a soul that is weighed down and labouring under a heavy load of sin. And Christ told his audience, except their righteousness exceeded the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, they should in no ways enter into

the kingdom of heaven. I might enter into a great and long elaborate discourse on this subject, but I forbear, as there is nothing that I can find in the Scriptures of truth but the blood of Jesus Christ, which can cleanse and purify the sinner's heart from all sin, laid hold on by faith. When the flashes of a broken law rise up in the conscience, and the curses of an angry and offended God stare it in the face, how foolish and vain is that notion which some people, and not a few, keep lurking in their breasts, that by their virtue, and piety, and good works according to the law, that in doing these things they please God, when in truth they do them not; but only a false imagination devised by the delusion of the devil; for where is the man, (Jesus alone excepted) recorded in Scripture, that ever was or is without sin? and, if sinful, the curse and wrath of God is upon him, which is pronounced in the holy law of God, until they be born again of the Spirit, and receive Jesus Christ by faith. And then they are clothed with his righteousness, and washed from their sins in his blood; then the sins of Jacob, and the iniquities of Israel, when they are sought for they shall not be found.

3 *And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him.*

The first clause of this verse informs us, that there shall be no more curse, because the curse is taken away by the blood of the Lamb, and consequently he establishes the blessing. Now, where the blessing is given, there can be no more curse; and there he erects his throne of love and mercy in the hearts of all his saved ones, and will rule and sway his sceptre there in peace and righteousness; and when the curse is removed, consequently death is conquered. We must understand this death to mean the second death, and not the death which separates the soul from the body, but that death which separates both soul and body from God. And for the last clause of this verse, "And his servants shall serve him," I shall refer to the 7th chap. of this book, from the beginning of the 9th verse unto the end.

4 And they shall see his face: and his name shall be in their foreheads.

I understand by seeing his face, to be a spiritual discernment by faith which is in him, and by his name being in their foreheads. Now, as Jesus Christ in Scripture hath many names given unto him, it is hard to determine which of these is meant. But I think that Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, will be the name, and this name believed in, and received by faith alone, it becometh the Lord our righteousness; and then this name will be

both in their foreheads, and in the innermost recess of the heart.

5 *And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.*

By there being no night there I understand, that all the inhabitants of that holy city will be so illuminated by the word and Spirit of God, that they will walk in a perpetual light of the gospel of Jesus Christ, in the full assurance of faith. And we see in the last clause, that the Lord God giveth them light; and we may be well assured, that when he is their light, they need no more. "And they shall reign for ever and ever." Here is a promise given by truth itself, that they shall never fall away from that light.

6 *And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done.*

Here is a confirmation of all these visions which John saw and heard, that is recorded in this book, declared by God to be faithful and true; which proves that Jesus Christ is the true and faithful witness, for God gave unto him this revelation to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass. Now, compare this verse with the first verse in this

book, and you will find the Lord God mentioned here, is the same with Jesus Christ mentioned there. Now, the visionary part ends with the 5th verse of this chap. and the 6th verse is a confirmation of all the visions which is contained in this book; and from the 7th verse to the end of this chap. is all admonitions given by the angel unto John, and by John to be given unto the church.

7 *Behold, I come quickly; blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.*

Now, what I understand by the word *blessed* here in this text, is this, that it is opposed unto the word *curse*; so it is not a bare salutation, but it is a permanent thing which contains all the happiness that the soul of man is able to receive or wish for. Now, we know that the Lord cursed the ground for man's sake in the garden of Eden, when our first parents ate the forbidden fruit; and, at the same time, he gave that most gracious promise to the woman, "that her Seed should bruise the serpent's head." Now, we see in chap. xx. 10. of this book, the devil's head bruised effectually, for he is cast into the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are. And in the last verse of chap. xx. it is said, "Whosoever is not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire." Now, this blessing

must be the same which God gave unto Abraham, "saying, In thy Seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." This very promise shews, that all nations lay under the curse, both Jew and Gentile, none excepted; and it hath taken place, and spread its baleful influence over the whole human race of mankind. Now, the word *blessed* comprehends in it the removal of that curse, by him who is the Seed of the woman. And he hath removed it by fulfilling the whole law of God, and redeeming his own chosen ones with his own precious blood; and in him they are blessed and happy indeed in time, and at death, and thro' all eternity, in his most glorious presence, singing his praise, and glorifying in thanksgiving unto him; for his unmerited and undeserved love and mercy, which he hath bestowed so liberally and exceeding abundantly upon them, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour: "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift." Now, as there never hath been any of the sons of Adam which hath kept the sayings of the prophecy of this book from the first, we have no reason to expect that any of them will do it for the future. So it must be him who was born of the Virgin, which hath borne that curse in his own body, and removed it out of the way, nailing it to his cross, and obtained the blessing for us which believeth in his name. —And here a word may be said concerning

faith, or believing on or in his name. And first of all, to know what true faith is, we must observe the confession of the apostles and disciples of Jesus Christ. And we shall begin with the apostle Peter, Matth. xvi. 16, 17. but we read from the 13th verse, "When Jesus came into the coasts of Cesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Now, this is the answer which Peter made unto the question that Jesus asked; and Christ crowned this confession of Peter's with the blessing, as we see in the 17th verse, "And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." We may observe in the 13th verse, that Jesus calls himself the Son of man, but in the 16th, Peter confesses him to be the Son of God. Now, here Christ confirms Peter's confession with double certification; *first*, by applying the blessing unto Peter, and then confirming his confession, owning God to be his Father. And if this be not true saving faith, it will be very difficult to be found. The next text you will find

in John i. 29, 34,--37. Here we have the record of John the Baptist concerning Christ,—here we find the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask who he was; and we see in the former part of the chap. many questions put to him by these priests, which were of the Pharisees, but John answered them plainly, “that he was not the Christ.” And when we come to the 29th verse, he points Christ out to them, “saying, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” In the 34th verse, he saith, “And I saw, and bear record that this is the Son of God.” In the 36th ver. “And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God.” In the 49th verse, we have Nathanael’s confession, “And he said unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel,” or thou art the King of princes; for all the chosen of God are made princes. In chap. vi. 68, 69. of this gospel, we have these remarkable words, “Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.” Now, if these texts, with many others which might be pointed out of the like import and meaning, which the Scriptures abound with, I say, if they do not convince us what true and saving faith is, in vain shall we seek for it any

where else.—As to the first clause of this verse, which I have omitted, “Behold, I come quickly.” This clearly points out to us, that the last and general judgment is not past; and it likewise proves, that all those things which John saw and heard, are to be fulfilled in this present world. For as Christ describes the state of the righteous, and the state of the wicked at that day—the righteous shall go into life eternal, but the wicked into everlasting punishment, prepared for the devil and his angels. And we know that that is the lake which burns with fire and brimstone; and the righteous shall be taken up to meet the Lord in the air, and so they shall be ever with the Lord, beholding his glory. And surely that must be where Christ is at his Father’s right hand, in his heavenly kingdom. Now, if all these things are transacted in that judgment that sits on the dead, mentioned in the latter part of chap. xx. as many understand it to be the last and general judgment, what need for the continuation of this great vision thro’ all the 21st chap. and unto the 6th verse of the 22d chap. and from thence to the end, so many exhortations and admonitions to the sons of men? for he saith, “It is to you, O men, I call, and my voice is to the sons of men.” Now, surely this call and voice of Christ must be to the sons of men while they are in the body on this earth, and not after they are doomed to their final state at

the great day of judgment and retribution of all things.

8 *And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things.*

Here John testifieth and confirms all these things, by declaring that he had both seen and heard them, and that those things are faithful and true, and, as it were, in a transport of joy, he falleth down at the feet of the angel to worship him. It is very remarkable, that this holy man fell into this blunder twice in these visions, when he should have known as well as the angel, that divine worship is only due unto God alone. But it is observable, that in both these texts where he falls into these mistakes, it is upon the account of the good things, and the glorious condition he saw the church of Christ would arrive to at different times. The first time is in chap. xix. 10. where he saw the in-gathering of the Jews, with the fulness of the Gentiles, to the marriage of the Lamb, and marriage supper. And here again on this text, after he had heard and seen such a glorious display of this holy city, and all the beautiful splendour and glory which the Lord Jesus Christ hath bestowed upon it, he was transported out of measure with joy and gratitude, and could not help worshipping; but being in such an extasy of joy and rejoicing, he mistook his

object. This shews unto us, how little men should trust in their own strength, even when they have the Spirit; for we are well assured, that John was in the Spirit all the time of this great vision, and yet he erred very greatly in going to give that worship unto the creature, which is only due unto God alone.

9 *Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.*

Here we see the error that John was in, by the rebuke which he got from the angel, and the direction given to him to worship God, which proves that divine worship is due to none but him that is God. And this proves, that Jesus Christ is God equal with the Father; for it is certain, that he was worshipped while he was on this earth, and he received that worship which was due unto God alone, without giving any rebuke unto them that gave him this divine worship.

10 *And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand.*

In Dan. xii. 9. we see Daniel dismissed with these words, "Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed until the time of the end." This informs us, that it was the will of God that there was no more of these visions, which was revealed to Daniel, to be

revealed to him, nor any other of the prophets of the Old Testament ; for there is no mention made of opening these words that was sealed up, neither in the Old or New Testament, till we come to Rev. v. 5. then he that sealed them up from Daniel, opened them to John, by opening the seven sealed books. So it appears, that the visions which was revealed to Daniel, and these in the Revelations of John, are much the self and same in substance ; particularly, Dan. ii. vii. x. xi. and xii. With this difference, Daniel's visions reacheth only to the beginning of the blessed state, which commenceth at the downfall of the Antichristian state, which ends with Rev. xix. ; but these visions of John reacheth unto the end of the thousand years reign, which closeth with the end of chap. xx. of this book, and then commenceth that most blessed state of Christ's kingdom on this earth, which is described in chap. xxi. and into the 6th verse of chap. xxii. Now, how vain a thing is it for any man, supposing him to be the greatest divine which ever wrote on Scripture, to offer to describe or unfold that heavenly kingdom which is reserved for the faints in another world, when it is written in the prophets, "That eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, to conceive the good things which God hath laid up in his own secret council for them that love him." The

apostle Paul was transported up to the third heavens; but doth he tell us what he either heard or saw? So far from it, that he telleth us, that it was not lawful for a man to utter those things which he both saw and heard. And St John in his first epistle, chap. iii. 2. saith, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." This is all the length that this beloved disciple could go; and if neither this inspired Divine, nor the apostle Paul, could give no account of that heavenly kingdom, far less it becomes any other man, let his qualifications be what they will, to intermeddle with those things which he hath no conception of. Now, it appears plain to me, whatever it may do to others, that all those things recorded in this book will be transacted and fulfilled in this world. And those that doth not consult Daniel's visions and understand them, will make but little progress in understanding the Revelations. As I said before, the visionary part of this book ends with the 5th verse of this chap. and from thence to the end consists of directions and admonitions to John, and by him to be delivered unto the church. And here he gives directions not to seal the sayings of the prophecy of this book, "for the time is at hand." What I understand by this sentence, "the time is at

hand," is this, that John was to reveal those things unto the church with all convenient speed; for these things that he had heard and seen was to commence immediately. And it is certain they did take place very soon after John had these visions revealed unto him; and these prophecies hath been fulfilling ever since, one after another, and will be fulfilled until this period, at which time this most blessed state of the church will take place. And from this period it appears, that there will be no more alterations in this blessed state of the church which was represented to John in this and the former chap. until the last day and general judgment of both quick and dead. As all the latter part of this chap. plainly points out, and clearly proves, that that judgment recorded in the latter end of chap. xx. is not, nor cannot be, the last and general judgment. Those who will give themselves the trouble to read from the 6th verse unto the end, and consult every verse, and weigh the whole, will plainly see, that the last and general judgment is yet to come; or else what is the need for all those advices and admonitions that is given through all the remaining part of this chapter, "Behold, I come quickly? &c.

*11. He that is unjust, let him be unjust still:
and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still:
and he that is righteous, let him be righteous
still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.*

Now, this verse informs us, that in whatsoever state we are in at the hour of death, so we shall remain until the last and general judgment, so we will be dealt with; if we are unjust and filthy, unjust and filthy we shall remain; and if we are righteous and holy, holy and righteous we shall remain; for there is no alteration after death, so as death leaves us, just in the same condition will judgment find us. And a dreadful meeting it will be unto all them which are found out of Jesus Christ, and having no interest in his righteousness and shed blood; they must all stand on their own bottom, and answer for themselves, according to the holy law of God, which condemns every transgressor.

And behold, I come quickly: and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. This, in this verse must be Jesus Christ, as all judgment is committed unto him, and he will give to every man according as his work shall be. Now to know the proper difference between the unjust and filthy, and the righteous and holy, we must examine other texts of Scripture; and the apostle Paul tells us, "that the just man lives by his faith," Gal. iii. 11; that is, lives by or in Christ. Now this text proves that all them who are not in Christ by faith, must be unjust and filthy; contrariwise, all them that believeth in Christ, are

righteous and holy. Now, according to which of these states the last day of judgment finds them in, so will their reward be. As to the clause in this verse—according as their work shall be. This word work, which is mentioned here and in many other texts of Scripture, is not to be understood according to our works anent our keeping the law; for in that case no flesh could or should be saved, “for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, by breaking his holy law; for there is none that doeth good and sinneth not, no not one.” Well then how shall we understand and apply this word work? Now in the text, it is called his work, not our work. Now I find in John vi. 29. Jesus Christ answering a question which the Jews put to him; “Jesus answered and said unto them, this is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.” Now according as that work of God is wrought in our heart by the Holy Ghost, so we stand or fall; if it be wrought effectually that we believe on Jesus Christ we shall be saved; if it be not wrought in our heart to believe on Jesus Christ, then we must stand our trial by the law, and be condemned; for the law curses every one to their face who breaks it. For the Scriptures clearly teach us, that all have broken and transgressed the law, therefore no flesh shall be justified by the law. Now the sentence

of the law is this, "the soul that sins shall die," Ezek. xviii. 20. And the apostle Paul informs us, "that there is none righteous no not one; that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God," Rom. iii. I would advise every one into whose hands this may come, to read the 3d chap. of Romans throughout, and study it attentively, and weigh it with due consideration, and I hope they will see, that by the deeds of the law no flesh can be justified; and it is a vain notion of men that think by their keeping of the law, and by virtue and piety, that they please God, and will be accepted by him; for God hath declared that he is well pleased in none, but in his own dear and beloved Son, whom he sent into this world that we might live through him; who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world. Now this great apostle of the Gentiles tells us, "that the life that I live in the flesh; I live by the faith of the Son of God; who loved me, and gave himself for me." I do not frustrate the grace of God, for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain. Now by this text every one that lays hold on the law, in any manner of way, with purpose to obtain either justification or faith, or any thing whatsoever tending to eternal life; they frustrate the love, mercy and grace of God; for there is no other name given under heaven by which men can be saved,

but by the name of Christ Jesus the Lord; and to them that receiveth him, to them he giveth power to become the sons of God, even to them that believeth on his name. Now unto the believers—when you have received the Lord Jesus Christ by faith in your hearts, rooted and grounded as you have been taught by the Holy Ghost in the love of God to your souls, in and through Jesus Christ, so walk in him unto all well pleasing, being fruitful in every good word and work, increasing in the knowledge of God; then your virtue and piety will be accepted of God, but only for Christ's sake, not for your own. But nevertheless it is your bounden duty to work well according as the law directs, for the law is a golden rule to the believers to walk by in their moral life and conversation, but by no means to obtain salvation by it.

13 *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.*

We have Jesus Christ in this verse informing John who he is, as he did in chap. i. 11. “the beginning and the end;” that is the beginning of the creation of God, for he is the very image of God, “for by him all things were created, visible and invisible, things in heaven and things in earth; whether they be thrones or dominions, principalities or powers, all things were created by him and for him, and he is before all things, and by him all

things consist." I can say little more of this text, only it plainly appears that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, co-equal, co-eternal with him in all his attributes; for he that created all things in heaven and things in earth must be God; and it is clearly taught in the Scripture, that Jesus Christ did create all those things, and upholds them all by the word of his power, and not only so, but he controls them all at his pleasure; for the raging billows of the sea, and the tempestuous winds when they are blowing in their full strength, he stilleth into a perfect calm with a word speaking. And moreover when he was an embryo in the virgin's womb, he was Lord of heaven and earth, and even then he upheld all things as he did from the beginning, and he is the end of all things, for the heavens and the earth shall pass away, but he endureth for ever. The apostle to the Hebrews, chap. i. 10,—12. writes thus, "Thou Lord in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands; they shall perish, but thou remainest, and they all shall wax old as doth a garment, and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail."

14 *Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.*

What are we to understand here in this text

by doing his commandments, when the Scriptures of truth inform us, that there is none that doth good, and that all the sons of Adam, as well as himself, hath transgressed and broken the holy commandment? Surely it cannot be meant here, that by our keeping or doing the commandment in our own person, that we may have a right to the tree of life. I think the plain meaning of this whole text is, being born again. In the regeneration we become the children of God, and if children, then heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ, and we are all sons and heirs of God; in and through Christ Jesus; for he is the heir of all things, and we are joint heirs with him: therefore our right unto the tree of life is derived wholly unto us from him, by the imputation of his meritorious and finished work of our redemption, imputed unto us and received by faith alone; for we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. Now we must consider this word *do*, in another light than doing the commandments contained in the moral law, because no man of the seed of Adam did ever keep them; therefore no man can have a right unto the tree of life by pretending to do the thing which he never actually did. Which way and in what light shall we consider and understand this word *do*? Isa. lvi. 3. God saith, "Incline your ear, and come unto me; *hear*, and your

soul shall live : and I will make an everlasting covenant with you ; even the sure mercies of David." And Matth. xvii. 5. " And, behold, a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased ; hear ye him." Acts iii. 23. " And it shall come to pass, *that* every soul which will not hear that prophet shall be destroyed from among the people." Luke x. 39, 41, 42. " And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things : But one thing is needful : and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her." 2 Thess. i. 10, 11. " When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe, (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day. Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of *this* calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of *his* goodness, and the work of faith with power." Now here we see faith is called a work, but it is the work of God and not of man. 1 John v. 22, 23. " And whatsoever we ask we receive of him, because we keep his commandments ; and do those things that are pleasing in his sight." And this is his commandment, " that we believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love

one another, as he gave us commandment. Now all these texts which I have quoted, I think proves clearly that we are to understand the word *do*, unto hearing the word of God, and receiving it by faith; not by doing the works of the moral law, or any other law whatsoever where our works is required; but it is by hearing the word of the gospel, and receiving it by faith that we have a right to the tree of life. 1 John v. 10—13. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." Now there is a very great difference between the law of God, and the Son of God; for the law of God never loved us and gave itself for us: But the Son of God both loved us, and gave himself for us an offering and a sacrifice unto God for a sweet smelling savour; and hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us poor wretched and cursed sinners; who deserved to have born the curse which we had merited in our own person, but Christ stepped in between us and the curse, and bore it himself in our room and stead, when he his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, and

by his stripes we are healed. And by entering in through the gates into the city, must be by him likewise; "for he is the way, the truth, and the life; and no man can come unto the Father but by him." Now suppose the tree of life, and the gates in this text, seem to be two distinct things, so they are represented in the former chapter; for the tree of life signifieth Jesus Christ; and the gates signifieth the apostles of the Lamb; yet we are not to understand that it is by them alone as men, that we may enter into the city; but by their doctrine which they taught by the Holy Ghost, and have left it on record unto us in the Scriptures of truth. The apostle saith, 1 Theff. ii. 13. "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing; because when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men; but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe." We must learn here from the apostle himself, that it is not by them as men, that we enter into the city; but it is by the word of God which they spoke by the Holy Spirit which was in them: likewise in 2 Theff. i. 10. "When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe, (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day." Here we see the reason given by the apostle, why Christ shall be glorified in his saints, and them in him;

and admired in all them that believe, because of their faith in the testimony which was delivered unto them by the apostles, and was received by them and believed on among them in that day. And now in this day, and at all times, and in all places, wherever the testimony of Jesus Christ is heard and received with faith; he gives them power to become the sons of God; and consequently they shall be glorified in him, and he in them, for they are his seed, and the travail of his soul.

15 *For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.*

We must consider this text very carefully, that it may not dishearten some well meaning persons, and swallow them up in despair; for who is free from some of these sins, either in thought word or deed? and by this text and some others, they may think that they are past recovery, and the devil will assist them in this diabolical thought, but let them know that where sin hath abounded, grace hath much more abounded; and as sin hath reigned unto death, grace hath reigned through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord; 1 Cor. vi. 9—12. “Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor

thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you : but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." By this text we are informed that those sins were very prevalent amongst these Corinthians, and he lays them to their charge ; " but such were some of you." Now he tells them whom he had charged with these sins, that they were washed, sanctified, justified, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the Spirit of our God. One might be induced to ask a question here, how they came to be washed from these gross abominations ? The apostle answers it, It is in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and by the Spirit of our God ; that is, by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ ; for the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin, let their sin be of never so heinous a nature against the law, even if they be of the scarlet colour, and of the crimson dye ; they shall be made like wool, yea they shall be made whiter than the snow ; for whosoever believeth in him hath everlasting life ; they have it even in this world, from the very moment they receive Christ as their Saviour by faith."

16 *I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the*

root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.

The first clause of this verse informs us that Jesus sent his angel to testify these things in the churches; meaning the seven churches in Asia. We are not to conceive by the plural number here, that Christ hath many churches on this earth; for there is but one church, and all these churches in Asia, were planted by one apostle, and they had all one doctrine, as long as they continued in the true doctrine of the gospel delivered unto them; so we are not to understand the plural number here as concerning the doctrine, but concerning the different parts of the country where these societies of Christians were placed, as we see in chap. ii. and iii. of this book. What are we to conceive by these things? I think by these things we are to understand all the whole visions that is recorded in this book. It is very observable in this verse that our Saviour calls himself plainly, Jesus, signifying unto John that he was that very person who was crucified at Jerusalem, on whose breast John leaned at supper, and asked who it was that should betray him. And in the second clause, "I am the root and offspring of David." By the root he affirms that he is God Almighty Creator of all things, and by offspring he affirms his real human nature; and by this assertion he confirms that he is both David's Lord and David's

Son: "And the bright and morning star." Baalam prophesied of him under that designation many hundred of years before he came in the human nature; and when he came "he led the wise men of the East, by a star unto himself, even to the very house which he was in, a babe on his mother's knee;" a true prognostic that he would draw the Gentiles into the true church of God; by the same influence of his word and Spirit of his grace, by which he drew these wise men. Now whatsoever these men were, as some will have them magicians, and that they found out the way by this star, by their magic arts; others will have them astrologers, and found out their way by this uncommon star which appeared unto them in their own country, and led them straight unto Jerusalem, and from thence unto Bethlehem. Now whatever they were, as there is no doubt but they were sinners of the Gentile nations, as all the sons of Adam were, and as the great apostle of the Gentiles defines them in Eph. ii. 12, 13. "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." Now as I said before, whatever they were before this time, I think they were wise men indeed when by this

star they found out Christ Jesus the Lord and their Saviour.

17 *And the Spirit and the bride, say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.*

In this verse we have an universal call of the gospel of Jesus Christ—Come, come, come, three times repeated, and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely. Now where is the presumption of coming unto Christ that some people preach up, and say that it is presumption in any sinner to come unto Christ, until such time as they are properly qualified by their good works of virtue and piety? then when they are dressed up in their own fig-leaved righteousness, then they may come and lay hold upon Christ by faith and be welcome. But there is no such thing mentioned as presumption in all this text. There is nothing required here but a willing mind, and those that are willing, may assure themselves that they are made willing in the day of his power. Now this invitation is given in this text unto all sinners, even unto the very chief of sinners against the law of God. Now let every one judge with himself if he be not a transgressor of that holy law of God; if he be not, then he hath no need of Christ, but if he be a transgressor, then that law which he hath

And now we have the word of the Lord.

transgressed can do nothing for him, but condemn him to his face, and assign him over to the blackest pit of condemnation. Now I think the presumption lies on the other side of the question, of sinners not coming unto Christ just as they are in their filthy robes of sin, that they may be cleansed from their unrighteousness, from which they could not be cleansed and justified by the law of Moses. How doth Christ upbraid the Jews, his countrymen according to the flesh; "saying ye will not come unto me that ye might have life;" and again, "if ye believe not that *I am he*, that is, the true Messiah, you shall die in your sins." On the other hand he saith, "I come to seek and to save that which is lost;" and again, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners unto repentance." Now "after the kindness and love of God unto man appeared, not by works of righteousness that we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed abroad abundantly upon us through Jesus Christ our Saviour." Now we are well assured that God manifested his love unto the church under the Jewish dispensation, but he has manifested it in a much more conspicuous way and manner, by the incarnation of his dear and well beloved Son, when he came into this world clothed with our human nature, and manifested forth his glory under

the cover of that body which was prepared for him, in which he wrought out our complete redemption; for even in that very body he hath entered in into that within the vial, and hath obtained eternal redemption for us. Now what is meant by the water of life, you will see chap. xxi. 6. and chap. xxii. 1. what is said on these texts concerning the water of life; to be short, it is the Lord Jesus Christ himself and his holy Spirit; and whosoever receiveth him by faith shall have this water springing up in him unto everlasting life; for they shall have the very fountain of this water which is Christ himself.

18 *For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:*

19 *And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.*

Here we have a very heavy doom denounced against any who shall add to or diminish from the words of the prophecy of this book. I understand these sentences to mean, any one that shall alter these texts wilfully or maliciously against Christ, or any way to his dishonour, or that may tend any way to the disadvantage of the faith of his own chosen ones, that they

will be dealt with accordingly; for I am well assured, that there is none who believe in Jesus Christ, will do any thing to his prejudice wilfully; and what they may do by mistake or through ignorance, God will forgive them for Christ's sake, as he forgiveth them all their other sins, in and through the merit and intercession of Jesus Christ. Now I conceive the true meaning of these two verses is, that these visions that is recorded in this book be not altered in any way, neither by adding any thing unto them, or by taking any thing from them; but we must let the text stand sound and unimpaired by us, for it is not by mens judgment in giving their opinion of the text, either by their words or by their writing that can add or diminish; for one man may have one opinion, and another man may have another opinion, and they both may be wrong; yet that doth not alter the text, as long as it standeth in the book as it was first wrote unto the church by the Divine himself.

20 *He which testifieth these things, saith, Surely I come quickly: Amen. Even so come, Lord Jesus.*

Here this verse I think proves, that the last and general judgment is not yet come, according to the scope of the whole vision; for if that judgment spoken of in the latter end of chap. xx. is the last, what need for all these admonitions and exhortations, and the visions

which follows in these two last chapters, and Christ testifying so often of his coming, if he be come already, and the last judgment be past and gone, and all the children of Adam assigned to their eternal abodes? But the truth is, that the coming of Christ must be understood in two different senses. For, first, he comes to every individual at death, either in mercy or in judgment, according as they are found in him by faith. If they be in him by faith, and his word be in them, then are they his disciples indeed, and he sheweth them his loving kindness and tender mercy; but if they be not in him by faith, they belong to the wicked one, (for there is no medium betwixt these two), and they are sure to meet with him an impartial Judge, who will render unto them as their work shall be; and as I said on the 11th verse, concerning the last judgment, so I say now; for in which of these states death finds us, so it leaves us, until that great day of accounts shall come; "For there is no work, nor knowledge, nor device, nor wisdom in the grave whether we are all hastening." Now this word *Amen*, signifieth, So be it, or it shall be done. That is, all the visions which was revealed unto John in this book, concerning the church, shall be fulfilled in their proper order, and in their due time. And they will be done by him which testifieth these things, and saith, "Surely I come quick-

ly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." But I understand this word Amen, in a more high and elevated sense; and I think it is equivalent unto the name which God took unto himself on mount Horeb, when he spoke unto Moses out of the burning bush—I am, I am that I am; that is, all things centres in me. For the whole word of God is a circle, and Jesus Christ is the centre, all points to him; "for all the promises are in him yea, and in him amen." There is a change of the person in the last clause of this verse. John speaks in the person, or in the behalf of the church. "Even so come, Lord Jesus." And all true believers will say "Amen: even come Lord Jesus;—into thy hands I commit my spirit."

21 *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.*

This last verse contains both a prayer and salutation to the seven churches in Asia, to whom he wrote this Revelation; and unto those Christian churches wheresoever they may be scattered abroad, in all places, and at all times; for John could not salute them with a greater blessing, than the grace of God to be with them; for the grace of God contains all spiritual blessings in heavenly things.

A P P E N D I X

TO THE EXPLANATION OF THE REVELATION.

WHAT I mean in this Appendix, is to draw the whole prophecies of Daniel, and the visions of St John in the Revelation, into one short and comprehensive view ; and give as distinct a calculation of the numbers which are given in these two books as I can do, with as much concision as the thing will permit.

And I begin with Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the image, and Daniel's interpretation thereof, Dan. ii. 32. " This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and thighs of brass, Verse 33. His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay."—Here is an image whose brightness and form was terrible. Now this image was all of one piece, there is no chasm nor division in it, altho' it consists of different metals. Now what I understand by this image being all of one piece and no chasm in it, is this : We see by Daniel's interpretation, that this image represented four great earthly monarchies, and as there is no chasm in the image, just so there is no chasm of time between these monarchies succeeding one another. For we see in that very night in which Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans was slain, Darius the Mede took the kingdom, Dan. v. 30, 31. Now as we see that there is no chasm here ; for these two events were both performed in one night ; for as soon as the king of the Chaldeans was slain, the Babylonian monarchy was translated unto the Medes and Persians. And so it is the same with all the rest ; for as soon as the he-goat smote the ram, and stamped upon him with his feet, the Persian monarchy was translated unto the Grecian. Now I am well assured, that the same consequence would take place when the Roman power conquered the Sulicaidy and Aligaidy, which were the only two remaining branches of the Grecian monarchy. Rome then became the head of the fourth monarchy, and mistress of the world. Now this fourth beast, Rome, I mean, which was dreadful and terrible

and strong exceedingly—"and it had great iron teeth, it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it." What is meant by stamping the residue, is this, the Romans subdued all the residue or remaining power of all these three monarchies which went before it, and brought them all under its subjection, and laid very heavy yokes upon them many ways, which need not be mentioned here. And any one that knows any thing about the Roman history will know that there was no chasm nor time lost here neither; for the Romans were not slack to take possession of their conquest.

Now I have shown that there is no chasm of time in the succession of all these four monarchies, but they all perfectly conformed unto the image. I must now examine the fourth monarchy or Roman empire, in its three stages, or in its different states. And it is called "a beast that was, and is not, and yet is," Rev. xvii. 8.; as I have given my opinion upon what these states are in that chapter, I need not resume it here. All I want is, to find if the Roman state agrees with the image through its various stages as the rest hath done. Now when Constantine the Great who had sixteen years war against the Pagan emperors, which fought against him, when he conquered Licinius the last of them, it is said, "then shall stand up in his estate, a raiser of taxes, the glory of the kingdom;" so there is no chasm here; for as soon as the Pagan emperor was down, the Christian emperor was up. In the same verse, it is said, "but within a few days he shall be destroyed, neither in anger nor in battle;" that is, the Christian state of the Roman empire should fall in a short time, and with it the whole succession of the Christian emperors along with it. Now the last Christian emperor in the west fell neither in anger nor in battle; for he abdicated the throne, and laid down his sceptre and purple robes, and betook himself to a private life; for he neither was assassinated by any of his own people, nor did he fall by the hand of his enemies in battle.

And in the next verse it is said, "and in his estate shall stand up a vile person to whom they will not give the honour of the kingdom; but he shall come in peaceably and obtain the kingdom by flatteries." Now who can this vile person be, if he is not the Pope of Rome? I know that this text is by many applied to Antiochus Epiphanes, one of the kings of the Grecian monarchy; but I am of another mind, and I could give my reason for it, but it doth not answer my purpose in this place. The text alluded to is in Dan. xi. 20, 21. It appears plain to me, that there is no chasm here, for as soon as the last Christian emperor abdicated the throne, the empire in the west was translated unto the ten horns of the beast, agreeable to the ten toes of the image.

In Dan. vii. 8. "Daniel considered the horns, and behold, there came up among them another little horn;" and in ver. 24. of the same chapter, it is said, "and the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise; and another shall rise after them." These two texts seem to be quite contrary, but they may very easily be reconciled, if we consider these ten kings, what time they arose; for some of them rose about the year 410 of Christ, and from that time until the abdication of the last Christian emperor in the west, one or other of these horns or kings, was still making fresh inroads upon the empire, till at last Adociacir made his conquest of Italy, the very seat of the emperor; therefore this little horn rose after some of the ten, and among other some of them, for it is most certain, they rose not all precisely at the self and the same time. For suppose Daniel says he saw ten horns rise out of the head of the beast, he does not say that they rose precisely at the same time; there can be no doubt but he saw them rise progressively as it actually took place when the vision was accomplished, one after another. But as soon as the emperor abdicated the throne, all these ten kings was established in their kingdoms, because there was none to contend with them, but before that time they were

only usurpers. Now it was in the year 476 of the Christian æra, that the last Christian emperor abdicated the imperial throne, and at that very time the Antichristian state of the Roman empire commenced.

I think by what is said, it is easy to see when the Pope rose, for he arose among these ten kings, and after some of them. However it makes no great matter when he rose, whether he rose at that time or 180 years after it, as some of our commentators makes it out; but I am well assured, that the Antichristian state began at that very time; and it is the proper rule to go by, for the image is now standing upon its ten toes; and ten toes in Daniel, and the ten horns both in Daniel and in the Revelation of St John points to the self and same thing. I would not wish to be understood here, that Antichrist began at this time, for the true church of Christ has been pestered and plagued with Antichrist from the first of the Christian dispensation; but my meaning is, that Antichrist at this time became the ruling power over the western part of the Roman empire, with the Pope of Rome on its head and his ten horns under him; for they gave their power unto the beast, until the word of God should be fulfilled.

I think I have shown that that there was no chasm in the image, and likewise that there was no chasm of time between all these monarchies in succeeding one another. It plainly appears that the Pope and his ten horns was established in their kingdoms, at the fall of the last Christian emperor in the west. Now having proved and established the proposition laid down upon the most solid ground that I can find in these two books of visions, and I think by the best rule which they afford, I now propose to take a short and summary view of the church from the beginning of the Babylonish captivity. And it appears by Dan. ii. 1. that the church was carried away captive in the first year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, this was the first carrying away, and the last was in the nineteenth year of his reign, as it is in Jer. xxxix. 1. "In the

ninth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the tenth month, came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and all his army against Jerusalem, and besieged it; *vex.* 2. And in the eleventh year of Zedekiah, in the fourth month, the ninth day of the month, the city was broken up;" chap. lii. 12. it is said to be the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar; so it appears that from the first carrying away unto the last was near about the space of twenty three years.

Now in Jer. xxv. 11. the Jews captivity was to last 70 years, but that number of 70 years of their captivity under the Babylonish kings, doth not belong unto the numbers in Daniel or in the Revelation of St John. However I apprehend that the captivity of the church of God hath never come to an end, from the first of the Babylonish captivity unto this day.

For I see in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, even although Cyrus relieved the Jews from their Babylonish captivity, and sent them back into Judah, to build the temple and the city of Jerusalem, yet they were still subject unto the Persian monarchies, and held in great vassalage and bondage by them; we may see that by Nehemiah being obliged to make the Jews work with one hand and hold their weapons of war in the other, for fear of their enemies coming upon them unawares, to devour them. Indeed we read of three of these Persian kings who shewed great kindness unto the Jews, *viz.* Cyrus, Darius, Artaxerxes, Longimanus or Abasuerus, in Esther, according to Prideaux's connections; but for all these favours that they received from these kings, and great favours they were, yet the Jews never were a free people, they were still subject to the Persian monarchy. And it was the same case with them under the Grecian Monarchy, for although Alexander, the first founder of that monarchy, did no hurt to the Jews in his conquest, yet his successors plagued them most wofully afterwards; for that monarchy was divided into two divisions, one part of it which went by the name of the Sulicaidy which reigned in the north

in Syria; the other which went by the name of Alligaidy, which reigned in Egypt; and these two powers had great wars one with the other, and the land of Judah lay directly between Syria and Egypt; and which ever way the wars went the Jews were always sure to suffer, and that to a great degree; for both these powers had an invariable hatred against the Jews, so that they were like a ship in a storm at sea, tossed and torn to pieces on each side.

And it was no better with the Jews under the fourth monarchy which was the Roman, for they conquered both these branches of the Grecian monarchy, and burned the temple in Jerusalem, and laid the city in ashes, and carried the whole inhabitants (which except the general massacre) captives; and so they remain unto this day dispersed through the nations. Thus far concerning the church under the Jewish dispensation.—Now whoever reads the Acts of the apostles, and are any way acquainted with the Roman history, will plainly see that it was nothing better under the Christian dispensation; for the church suffered most great and horrid persecutions under the reign of the Pagan emperors for the space of 326 years. Indeed one would think that when Constantine the Great conquered all these Pagan emperors, and took the Christians under his protection, the church would have been safe and secure; but it turned out far otherwise. Indeed we have an account at the opening of the seventh seal, “that there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour;” that is, the church had rest and quiet for a short time, for half an hour is the shortest number in all these visions. And it is certain it was not long, for that episcopal discipline was set up among the Christians, which was and is the very mother of Popery. And by these degrees in ecclesiastical orders the church was brought into subjection to the traditions of men, and hath remained in that condition ever since, under the reign of the Pope of Rome and his horns. So we see that the true church hath never been free, but has always

been in subjection unto one power or another ever since the first carrying away of the Babylonish captivity, nor never will be free as long as that episcopalian discipline stands either among Popish or protestors against it; for popery is nothing else than the seed and brat of episcopasy. How widely both these differ from our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ's example, which he gave unto his disciples; John xiii. 14. 15. "If I then your Lord and Master have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet; for I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you." Now how far either the Roman or the Episcopal discipline agrees with the command given by our Saviour, let any man judge, not to say any thing concerning their doctrine.

After having shewn, that the church hath never been free since the first carrying away into Babylon, until this present time, I now proceed to treat of the numbers which is mentioned in the visions of Daniel. And in chap. viii. 13, 14. it is said, "How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?" And the answer given by Palmoni, the wonderful numberer, "Unto two thousand and three hundred days: then shall the sanctuary be cleansed." I know that many do understand this number only to mean days literally taken, which they think was fulfilled by Antiochus Epiphanus, when he over-ran the land of Judah, and set up idol worship in the temple of Jerusalem, which lasted about six years and four months; but about these things I am not to dispute; for I believe that these things actually took place at that time; and, indeed, this whole 8th chap. seemeth to favour that opinion. But I cannot think, that this number can be confined to such a short time; as I see in the 26th verse, Daniel is bid shut up the vision, "for it shall be for many days." Therefore I understand this number prophetically every day for a year, which will amount to 2300 years, and that will reach from the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, until the latter.

end of the Roman Antichristian state. Now, I am to consider the partial numbers that is mentioned in Daniel, and in St John's Revelation, and what I can borrow from the Roman history, and see how they agree with this total number of 2300 years.

First, Then, in Dan. ix. 24. there is "seventy weeks determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city." These seventy weeks is generally understood to continue 490 years; but to find out when these seventy weeks commenced hath been difficult to many. However difficult it may be to know the beginning of them, it is no difficulty to ascertain the latter end of them; for Jesus Christ was crucified in the midst of the last week, so, consequently, these 490 years was expired before his crucifixion.

I shall likewise give my opinion when they commenced. And in the 23d verse, it is said, "At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth." Now, in the 1st verse, Daniel informs us, that he began his supplication in the first year of the reign of Darius the Median, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans. Now, this Darius was uncle unto Cyrus, and king of Media; and he likewise became father-in-law to Cyrus, after Cyrus took Babylon. To understand how Cyrus conquered and took Babylon,—when it is said in Daniel, "that Darius the Median took the kingdom;" Cyrus was head general over all the forces and army of the Medes and Persians, under Darius, for the space of 21 years before he took Babylon; and when he took it, he gave the honour and glory unto his master, and went back to Media. And for the great services he had done unto the king, he gave him his only daughter to wife; and by this marriage he became son-in-law to Darius, and heir to the kingdom of the Medes. And he brought Darius unto Babylon, and installed him first king over the great monarchy of the Medes and Persians; but he reigned only two years, and died in Babylon. And then Cyrus became the second king over that great realm which he himself had conquered. Now, as I said before, that I

would give my opinion when the seventy weeks commenced, I think they began in the first year of Cyrus's reign over the Persian monarchy. Whoever will read Dan. ix. 23, 25. and compare them with the three first verses of Ezra i. and 15th verse of chap. v. and from the beginning of chap. vi. 1.—13. of the same book of Ezra. I think these texts of Scripture compared together will give a full satisfaction unto any unprejudiced mind. I know there is authors that differ widely from this opinion which I have given; but it is not my business to confute or condemn any man for their opinion. My own opinion is this, that the seventy weeks commenced in the first year of Cyrus's reign, agreeable unto the texts cited above, there was other decrees came forth from other kings of Persia, Cyrus's successors, but they were subsequent, and were built upon that first proclamation of king Cyrus.—Having dwelt longer on these seventy weeks than I intended, I come now to consider the partial numbers from the crucifixion of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, until the conquest of Constantine the Great over the Pagan emperors, was 326 years; and from his ascending the throne of the Roman empire, until the abdication of Augustulus the last Christian emperor in the west, was 149 or 150 years, the odds is not great, and that was in the year of our Lord 476, from which time I date the rise of the Pope of Rome; and the time of his reign we have in Dan. xii. 7. given in the designation of time, times, and an half; and this text is clearly explained unto us in Rev. xii. 6, 14. which amounts to 1260 years, and in Dan. xii. 11, 12. there is 75 years added unto the 1260.

Now, I shall proceed to arrange these partial numbers in order in the margin, and we will see that they exactly agree and correspond with the first total number.

	Years.
<i>First</i> , I mark down the total number given } in Dan. viii. 14.	2300
<i>Secondly</i> , From the first year of Cyrus's reign, } until the crucifixion of Christ	490

<i>Thirdly</i> , From the crucifixion of Christ, until the conquest of Constantine	326
<i>Fourthly</i> , From the conquest of Constantine, until the fall of Augustulus in the west	149
<i>Fifthly</i> , From the fall of Augustulus in the west, until the fall of the Pope and Antichrist	1260
<i>Sixthly</i> , The 75 years added unto the Pope of Rome's forty-two months	75
Now, subtract the number before Christ's crucifixion, and that will give the year of the Christian æra, when the blessed state of the thousand years reign begins	2300
	490

1810

No doubt but many may think, that there will a very great and visible change take place at this period which is marked above, but as to the visibility of it, I will not take upon me to say. It may even be but very imperceptible unto the superficial beholder that looketh only unto the outward appearance; for we know that Christ hath told us, "that the kingdom of God cometh not with observation;" and it is certain, that the Pope of Rome did not rise with observation; for we are still at a loss to know the precise time when he did rise first to the supremacy and head of the church of Rome. We know that he did rise unto that dignity, but the precise time that he arose, that is still a question amongst divines until this day; and for that very reason I allege, that the beginning of the thousand years reign may be as imperceptible as the beginning of the Papacy was. Nevertheless, my opinion is, that it will begin at that time, or near about it, however imperceptible it may be unto the eyes of the world.

ERRATA—Page 23, line 13, for *words* read *works*.

P. 146, l. 6, for 1311 read 1811.

P. 174, l. 21, for 1744 read 1754.

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